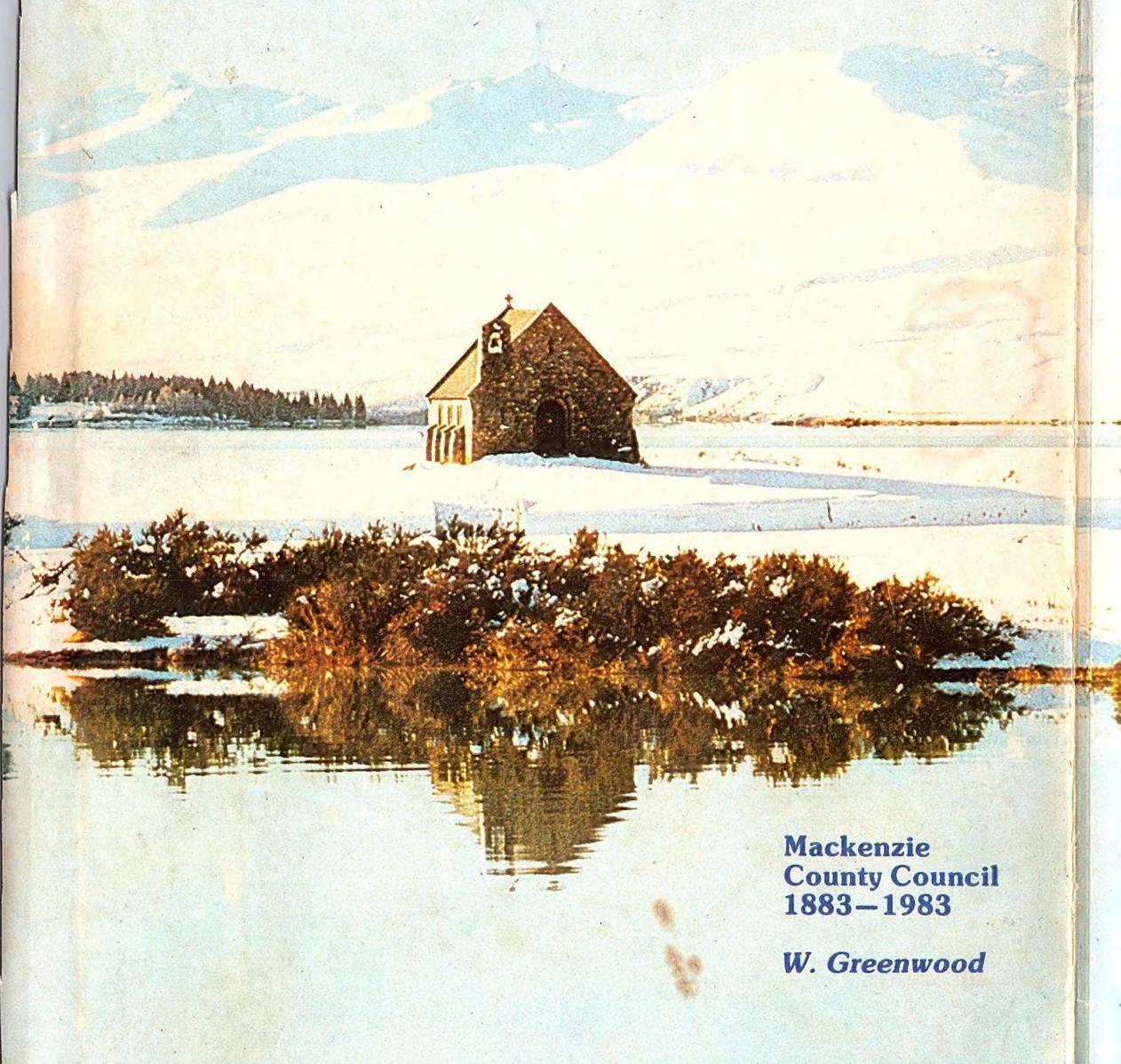


# CENTURY OF CHALLENGE



Mackenzie  
County Council  
1883–1983

*W. Greenwood*

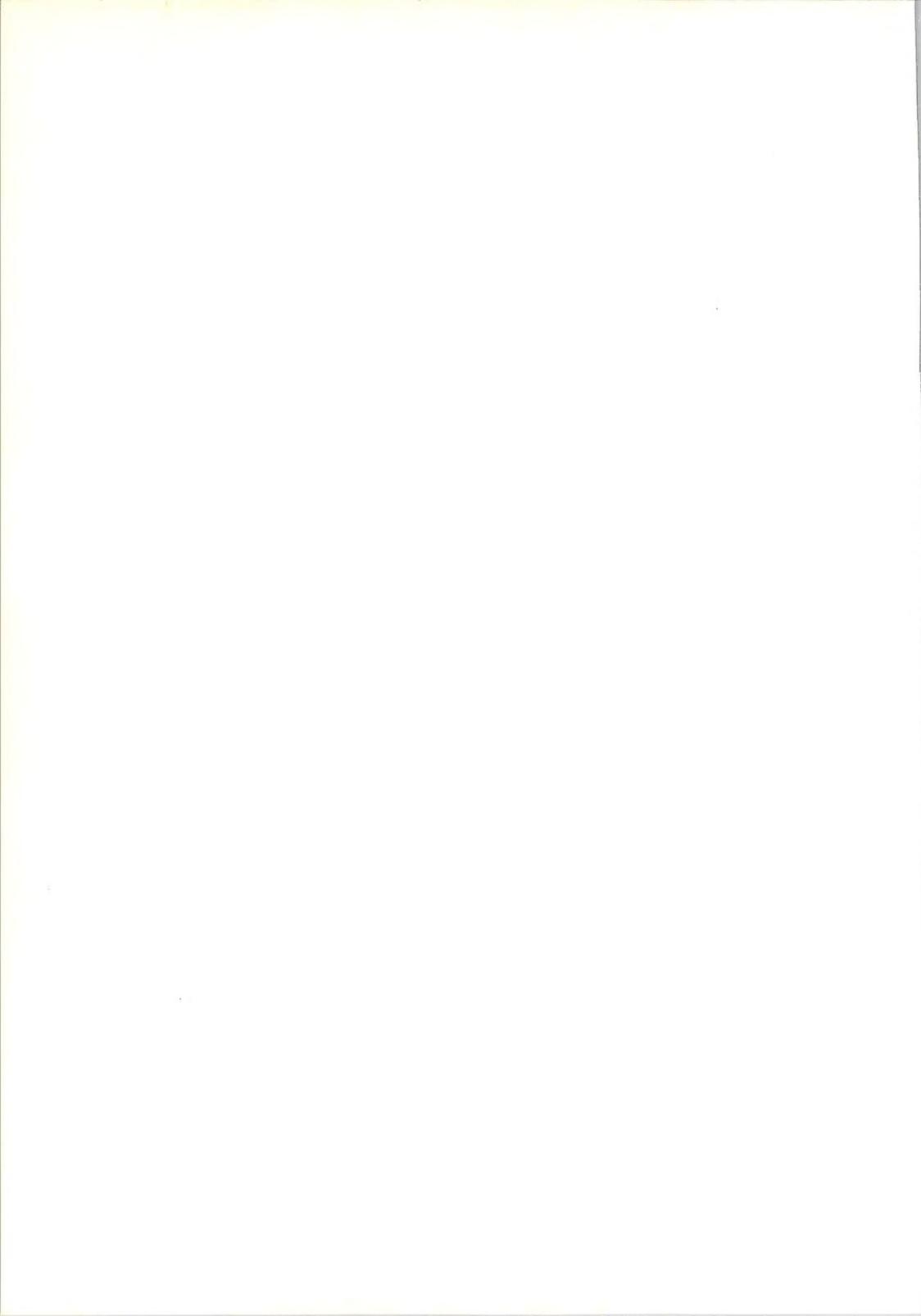
## CENTURY OF CHALLENGE

This is the story of the guiding hand of local government in the transformation of a back-blocks wilderness into a thriving county. It starts with a sheep stealing episode in 1855, the first settlers the following year, early representation on the Canterbury Provincial Council, the Mount Cook Road Board from 1864 to 1883, and then decade by decade to the present day. The primitive conditions and problems of the nineteenth century are vividly portrayed from a local body's point of view. How the Mackenzie County Council dealt with such things as the rabbit menace, traction engines, and other concerns, are set alongside the laying off and formation of roads and bridges, financed by the Provincial Council, then the Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works, "thirds" and "fourths" and rating. The special problems created by the two world wars, the great economic depression, and unemployment are dealt with. Schemes of local government reform and amalgamation with contiguous counties up to the formation of the Aorangi United Council help to provide an interesting story which justifies the title "Century of Challenge."

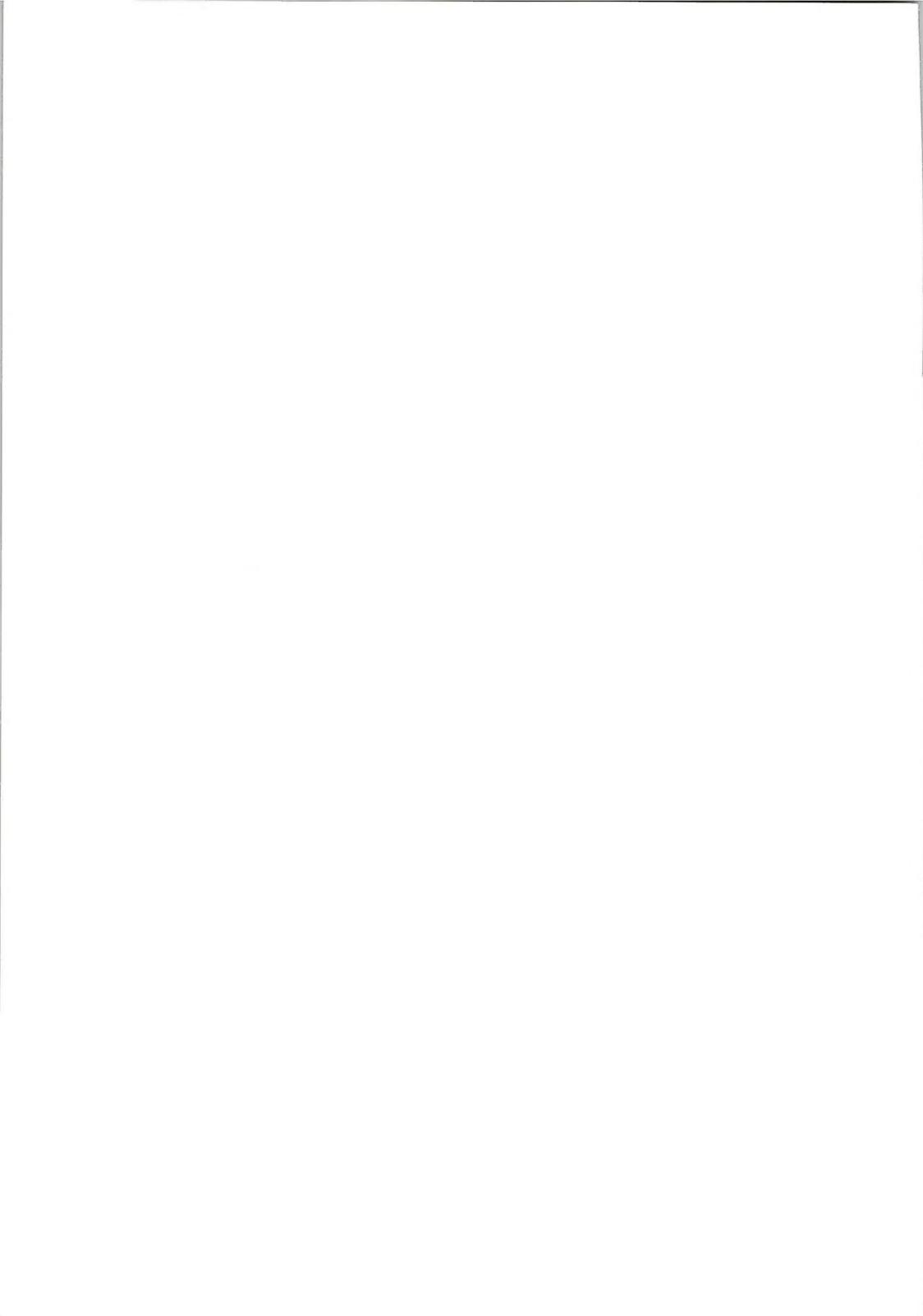
*Dust Cover depicts Lake Tekapo and the Church of the Good Shepherd, with a backdrop of the Southern Alps.*



E. B. Glass.







# Century of Challenge



# Century of Challenge

*by*  
*William Greenwood*

Mackenzie County Council  
A Centennial Chronicle,  
1883-1983



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1983

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## DEDICATION

To the board members, county councillors and their chairmen who have given unstinted sacrificial service over the years.

To the engineers, contractors, overseers, foremen, teamsters, drivers, surfacemen, rangers, gangers, and patrolmen who have been conscientious and faithful in the planning, developing and maintenance of the county's roads, bridges, plantations, water races and other amenities.

To the county clerks and their assistants who, among their administrative duties, have meticulously kept a faithful record of the council's activities over the century.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many years ago, a visiting American Methodist bishop told me that if I used someone else's material it would be plagiarism, but if I used the material of half a dozen people, it would be research. There is plenty of research in this book. When I was appointed in September 1982 to compile the history of the council, I realised that it was a tall order to have the book completed within twelve months, and that the time allotted to me would be nine months at the most.

The main sources of information have been the complete minutes of the council, and the Mount Cook Road Board back to 1864, and bound volumes of newspaper reports from 1889, when Mr R. L. Banks became clerk-engineer. Reports of the first election in 1883 were also kept. The following is a list of references sources:

- Minutes of Mount Cook Road Board, 1864-1883
- Minutes of Mackenzie County Council, 1883-1983
- The Timaru Herald*
- The Timaru Morning Post* and the *Timaru Post*
- Jubilee History of South Canterbury* — Johannes Andersen
- South Canterbury, A Record of Settlement* — O. A. Gillespie
- Cyclopaedia of New Zealand* — Canterbury (1903)
- Encyclopaedia of New Zealand* (1966)
- High Endeavour* — William Vance
- Early South Canterbury Runs* — Robert Pinney
- From the Beginning* — Phyllis Kerr
- Timaru Centenary* — J. S. Parker
- The Streets of Timaru* — J. B. Hamilton
- Life on a Five Pound Note* — Evelyn Hosken
- Newspapers in New Zealand* — G. H. Scholefield
- Early New Zealand Engineers* — F. W. Furkert
- Pioneering in Pumice* — E. Earle Vaile

In addition I have received help, advice, and encouragement from many people, all of whom it would be impossible to list. Among these are the Mackenzie County Council chairman, Mr B. J. O'Neill, the county clerk, Mr B. J. Dwyer, and in particular, Mr J. R. Fougere, the consulting engineer representing the firm of Milward, Fougere, Finlay and Lobb. Not only did Mr Fougere arrange for all the minutes and newspaper records to be stored in the firm's strongroom in Timaru, but he read through the manuscript, and from his expert knowledge of the county gave valuable information and advice.

Of the *Timaru Herald* staff were Messrs S. R. Bennett (manager), M. J. Vance (editor), D. E. Drake who gave practical advice, G. J. Kearns, D. H. Wood and Mrs T. R. Clyss. Others include Sir Basil Arthur, M.P.,

Mr W. Torepe, Rev. W. C. Charteris, Mrs V. M. Leaper (High School Board), Messrs J. G. Mouat (Catchment Board), D. E. Pearson (town clerk, Timaru), R. D. Veitch (formerly consulting electrical engineer to the council), A. L. Williams, B. A. Blanchard, and Mrs R. E. Bridges (Blenheim). Information has been supplied by the Lands and Survey Department, the General Assembly Library, the Medical Council of New Zealand, the Registrar-General's office, and the New Zealand Railway and Locomotive Society.

The complete manuscript was compiled and typed in our living room, and I must thank my wife, Elsie, not only by assisting in reading it over and correcting it, but for accepting the inconvenience of having books and papers littering the floor and table when I was working on the assignment.

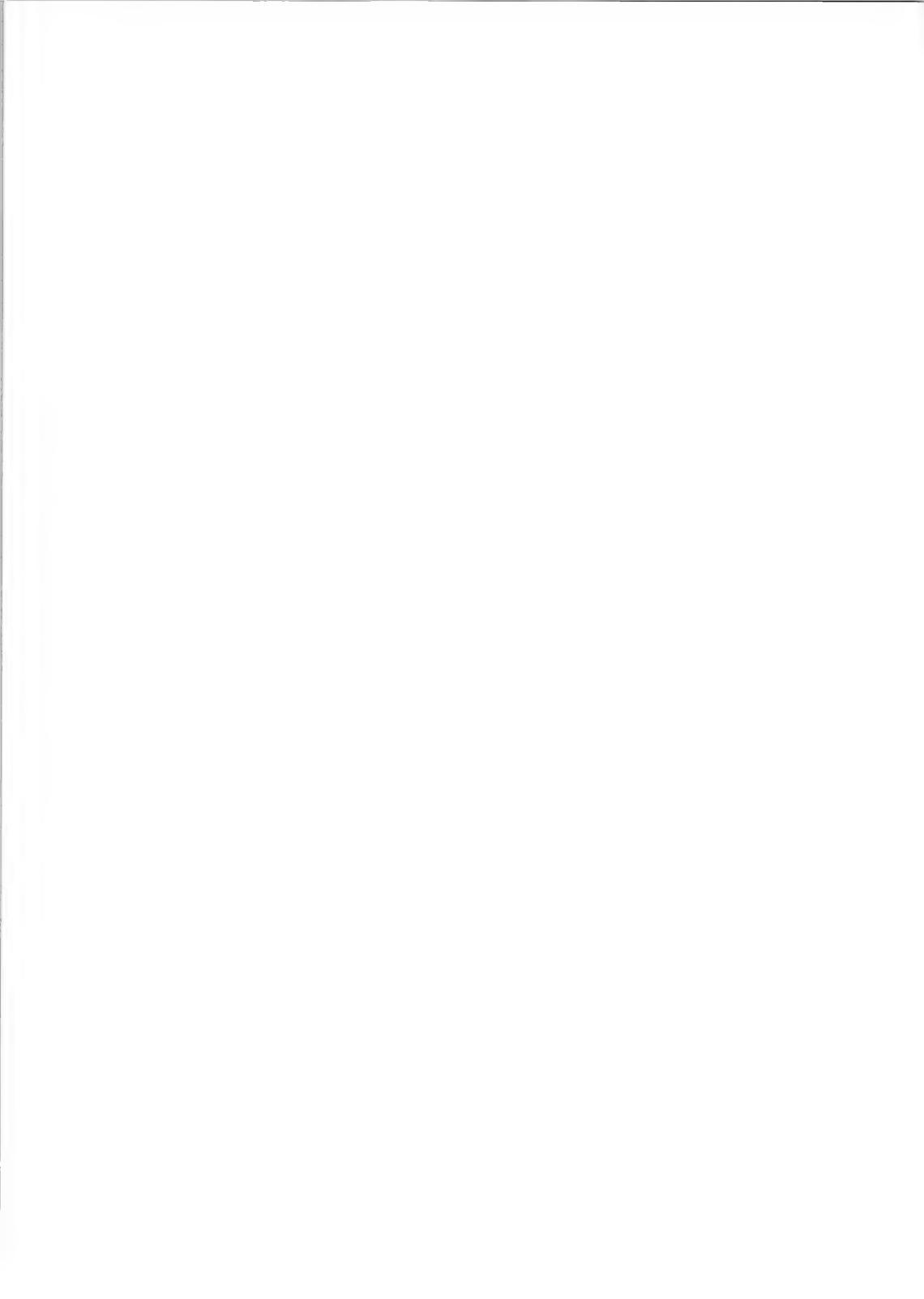
I have the satisfaction of having completed this work in the confidence that I am presenting to the council an authentic account of its history.

W. GREENWOOD

245 Otipua Road, Timaru

— — — — —

“Newspaper clippings — culled from various newspapers, including the *Timaru Herald* and a contemporary once published in Fairlie — combine to make an interesting history of the Mackenzie county. Since 1889, Mr R. L. Banks has saved clippings from all newspapers having any reference to the Mackenzie district, and the result today, is that the county has an interesting record in five well-bound volumes. Mr D. Jeune, who has succeeded Mr Banks as county engineer and clerk, has signified his intention of continuing the record.” (April 1929)



## FOREWORD

It is with considerable pleasure that the council presents a full history of local government in the Mackenzie over the past one hundred years with it being the general opinion that this quite illustrious history, as held in the council's archives, should be presented in book form to commemorate the occasion.

The council commends the efforts of the author, Mr W. Greenwood, for his excellent presentation.

When one peruses the various chapters, the great challenges which have arisen within the county during the past century become very obvious. In reflecting on the county's early history and appreciating its remoteness and difficult winter climate, coupled with minimal roading and bridging, one cannot help but have the utmost respect and admiration for the county's first settlers who prevailed despite adversities which would make the ordinary person cringe and perhaps give up the ghost. Today, as a result of the solid foundations laid by those pioneers, the whole area has prospered and has become a tourist attraction with scenery equal to the best in the world. In fact, one could say it is fast becoming the winter playground of the south.

The enormous resources of its glaciers and snowfed rivers and lakes have been energy sources for numerous hydro-electricity stations which today service the whole nation. The resultant man-made lakes coupled with natural mountain scenery dominated by the Southern Alps and Mount Cook can, by virtue of greatly improved access, be reached by both overseas and New Zealand tourists within a relatively short space of time.

The present generation must always remember the trials and efforts of a considerable number of outstanding men and women who were responsible for the progress which has been achieved and in so doing they should look forward also with confidence to similar progress in the future.

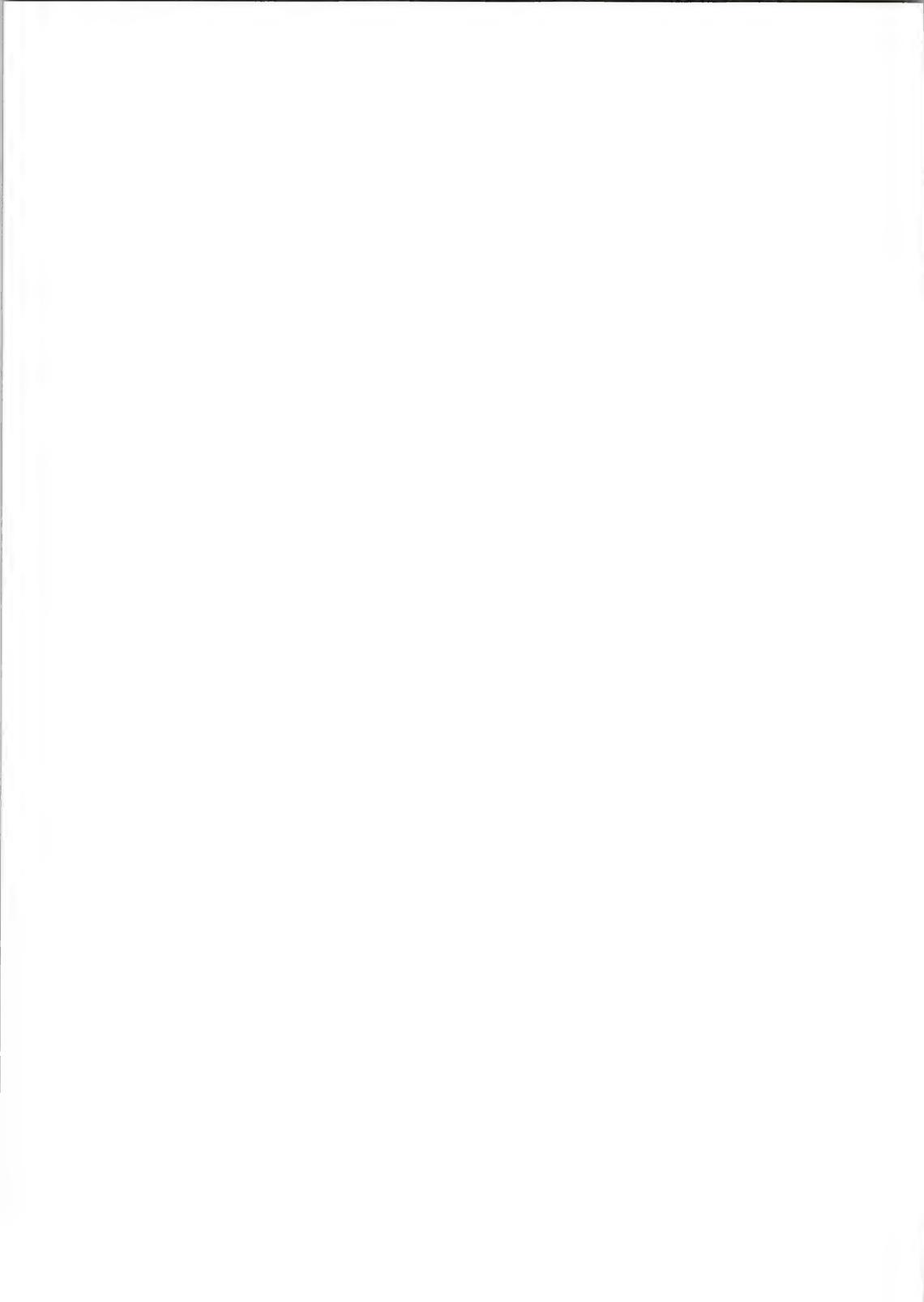
B. J. O'NEILL, J.P.

*County Chairman*



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# 1

## From the Beginning to 1864

JAMES MCKENZIE — REIVER OR SCAPEGOAT

Nunquam ad liquidum fama perducitur.

*Report can never be brought to state things with precision.*

— Latin proverb

If incongruity can create lasting fame, the Mackenzie County must rank high in perpetuating the memory of a celebrity sentenced to five years imprisonment for stealing 1000 sheep, and subsequently pardoned after serving a mere nine months on the grounds that there could have been a miscarriage of justice.

A degree of mystery surrounds his activities, and even his name is mis-spelt. His correct name as he signed himself is James McKenzie, but he is more generally known as James Mackenzie, the name by which the Mackenzie country was named after him. He was a native of Inverness-shire, who emigrated to Australia about 1849, where he earned money transporting supplies to the gold diggings. He then came to New Zealand, and disembarked at Nelson. He worked his way south to Mataura where he bought two working bullocks and equipment, and sought employment.

Apparently McKenzie undertook to drive sheep from Canterbury to Otago, and said he had two accomplices, one of whom was named Mossman, though this man has never been traced. In March 1855, a mob of about 1000 sheep were found to be missing from Levels Station. The sheep were tracked westward through the low passes to the plains beyond, now the Mackenzie country. On the 4th March, he was overpowered by the Levels overseer, Mr J. H. C. Sidebottom, and two Maoris, but escaped and was later arrested in Lyttelton, and charged with the theft of the sheep. On 12th April he was sentenced to five years imprisonment, but was unconditionally pardoned nine months later.

In a signed petition to the Governor, Colonel Thomas Gore Brown, McKenzie related details of his life, his engagement by an unknown man to drive sheep from Canterbury to Otago, and other events leading up to his arrest. The contention of Mr H. J. Tancred, sheriff of Lyttelton, that there had been a miscarriage of justice, and that others were involved in the theft, and a minute by the Superintendent of Canterbury, James Edward Fitzgerald, supporting this view, led to his pardon. In the pardon his name is spelt "McKenzie". Nothing is known of him since he sailed from Lyttelton to Australia in January 1856.

William Vance in *High Endeavour* says, "A Presbyterian minister from Australia once told Andrew Burnett that Mackenzie (sic) had settled in Queensland, where he became a well-to-do and respected citizen."

There is a monument on the probable site of the capture of James McKenzie, with the inscription, "In this spot James Mackenzie the freebooter was captured by John Sidebottom and the Maoris Taiko and Seventeen and escaped from them the same night, 4th March 1855."

### NGA TANGATA WHENUA

*Ye stars, which guard yon circumpolar field,  
Which turn, and as ye turn write history's page,  
Oh! share the wisdom unto you revealed;  
Unfold the mysteries of a bygone age.*

— Hare Hongi

Before the coming of the European settlers, the Maoris were well acquainted with the Mackenzie country and the Upper Waitaki. Such few tribes as there were lived mainly on the coast. Statistics compiled by Edward Shortland in 1840 showed the two main tribes at Waiateruati to be Ngati-tahu and Kati-mamoe, with a population of a mere 130 people. Canterbury had been almost depopulated by the calamitous raids of Te Rauparaha.

The attraction of the coastline was the ready availability of fishing at the river mouths, and canoe transport to travel from place to place. The Mackenzie country would be well known for its weka, and pukekos, and for eels, a favourite Maori dish, which abounded in the streams and lakes. Earlier still the moa roamed the Mackenzie before it became extinct.

Greenstone tools have been found alongside Maori ovens at Haldon, Jack's Creek, Simon's Hill, and Boulton Gully, situated on the north-east side of Lake Pukaki. Judging from the number of fractured skulls found at a hollow near Black Forest, warfare was not unknown on the Mackenzie plain. Rock drawings are also found at various places. Maoris would set out on a hunting expedition in mid-summer and return home about three months later in the autumn.

When the site of Mount Hay homestead was being cleared in 1858, old Maori fisherman's whares were still standing. The Maoris had a quartz quarry at Gray's Hill, where the Ngati-tahu possessed a small pa. John McHutcheson, the first settler in the Mackenzie, found moa bones in various places. Long before the advent of the pakeha, Burkes Pass was known to the Maoris as Te Kopu Opihi, and the access to the Mackenzie country.

According to Maori history, there was a chief named Rakaihautu, and his followers, who had trekked from further north along the foot of the main range, and formed a pa on an island in Lake Tekapo. The Maori name of this island is Taka-karara, but it has always been shown on maps as Motu-Ariki. Rumour had it that there was some form of monster, or taniwha, in the lake, which according to records was last seen about the 1880's.

In the picturesque mythopoetic language of the ancient Maori, this Rakaihautu, a variant of Rakaihautu, started from the north, and scooped out the basins of the South Island with his ko, an agricultural instrument.

He started with Lakes Rotoiti and Rotoroa in Nelson, and then Takapo (not Tekapo), Pukaki and Ohau (not Ohau), which he found quite easy. He found southern lakes like Hawea, Wanaka and Wakatipu more difficult.

The great series of lakes accredited to him are proverbially referred to as Nga Karikari-a-rakaihautu, the excavations of Rakaihautu, or more prosaically to us unimaginative moderns, the discoveries or revelations of Rakaihautu.

Some may wonder at the confusion of names, Waitangi and Waitaki. It must be realised that standard Maori was put into a written language in the form we have it in the North Island, and it is therefore doubtful if this is entirely adequate. There is a South Island dialect, where the North Island "ng" would be replaced by the Ngati-mamoe (Kati-mamoe) "k". The word "kainga", a village, is a case in point. In the South Island it is "kaika" and even the word "kaik" is not out of place.

In 1980, Mr W. Torepe, on behalf of the Ngaitahu Maori Trust Board, made submissions to the Local Government Commission that the proposed Aorangi Region should be named the Aoraki Region, the former being unacceptable to the southern Maori dialect. An editorial in the *Timaru Herald* supported the submission, but the commission did not make the alteration.

Be that as it may, the northern spelling of Waitangi has given way to the southern Waitaki, but Aorangi still remains with us.

#### THE FIRST SETTLERS

*They saw, from yonder mountain's brow,  
Plains yearning for the spade and plough;  
And where the naked rivers ran,  
Vales waiting to be dressed by man;  
Their help all Nature seemed to woo,  
'Neath speckless skies of sunny blue.*

— Thomas Bracken

The discovery of the Mackenzie plain as a result of the arrest of James McKenzie by John H. C. Sidebottom naturally led to applications for pastoral rights. In May 1855, there was an application made by Sidebottom himself, for a pastoral licence over 75,000 acres vaguely described as "near the sources of the Waitangi, bounded on the north by the Snowy Mountains, on the east by the Snowy Mountains, on the south by a branch of the Waitangi river, and on the west by the Snowy Mountains." This would include practically the whole of the Mackenzie plains. The application was approved, but Sidebottom did not stock the run, and the lease was cancelled.

The next we hear is that Mr John McHuteson, or John Mack Hutcheson, and his nephew Francis Sinclair, who were then living at Pigeon Bay, Banks Peninsula, explored the area. There seems to be some confusion as to his correct name, but the fact is that on 4th July 1856, he married Mary Gorrie at the residence of her father, Mr James Gorrie, Bridge Street, Nelson, and used the name John Mack Hutcheson on that occasion. The officiating minister was the Rev. T. D. Nicholson, Presbyterian. His occupation in the marriage certificate is shown as sheep farmer. It would appear that at some stage he dropped the "Mc" and assumed the name John Mack Hutcheson, by which name he became mayor of Blenheim in 1874. He died in 1899, Hutcheson Street in Blenheim being named after him.

Within a month of his marriage, together with his wife, Mary, Francis Sinclair, Henry J. Gladstone and two half-caste Maoris, he set off from Pigeon Bay to establish on the south-eastern shores of Lake Pukaki the first station in the Mackenzie country. They packed provisions for three months, together with a 16ft Maori canoe on a sledge which was shod with iron runners and drawn by four bullocks. The party, with the exception of the McHutchesons, returned to Pigeon Bay to bring back some fifty head of cattle. After two years the McHutchesons left Pukaki. The events are commemorated in the naming of Mary Range and Maryburn Stream after Mrs McHutcheson, Simons Hill and Simons Pass after one of the Maoris who accompanied them, and Dover Pass after the horse ridden by Sinclair on his exploration tour.

The next settler was John Hay, who occupied a run of 35,000 acres on the shores of Lake Tekapo. He and his uncle Ebenezer, also of Pigeon Bay, selected this run in 1857. The Hays are credited with having the first flock of sheep in the Mackenzie country, and a Provincial Government census of 1860 records 1500 sheep on Tekapo Station. They sold their run in 1867 when they moved to Kakahu.

After the arrival of the Hays, development was rapid. Early names associated with pioneering include Beswick, Brown, Burnett, Clowes, Cox, Dark, Delamain, Dunnage, Fraser, Hall, Hayhurst, Hodgkinson, Kennaway, Lockhart, Maude, McGregor, Ostler, Radove, Sheath, Stericker and Teschemaker.

#### PROVINCIAL COUNCIL MEMBERS

##### TIMARU ELECTORAL DISTRICT

Before the election of Charles Newton to the Canterbury Provincial Council in 1862, it can hardly be said that the Mount Cook district had any direct representation on that body. The Christchurch Country District electorate included the whole of Canterbury beyond (south of) the towns of Christchurch and Lyttelton and the district of Akaroa. In 1855 to 1856 there were only eight men registered in the electorate including a Henry A. Scott of Glenmore, a stock owner, whose qualification was 100 acres. Glenmore is not the high-country station but an area at the foot of Banks Peninsula. The province itself extended from the Hurunui river to the Waitaki and from coast to coast.

The qualifications for voting for both political and local body representation were based on property ownership — plural voting. The Mackenzie Country's first representation was when the Timaru Electoral District was created on 28th May 1857, and was allowed one representative on the Canterbury Provincial Council.

The first representative, elected unopposed, was John Studholme of Waimate. He resigned in 1859 and was succeeded by George Duncan Lockhart, who held a lease of large areas in the Hakataraemea country, and was soon demanding access roads to that region and to the Mount Cook district.

More important, however, was the election of his successor, Robert Wilkin, the man who fought for the division of South Canterbury into four areas of which Mount Cook was one. Mr Wilkin is described as a runholder, provincial politician and businessman. His property and business interests were widespread throughout Canterbury. He never lived in his Timaru electorate, which

he represented on the Provincial Council from 1860 to 1862, continuing as a member for Timaru after the subdivision until 1864, and then Waitangi until 1866. He represented Kaiapoi in Parliament from 1863 to 1866.

A New Zealand census was taken on 16th December 1861, just prior to Mount Cook being created a separate electoral district. The published abstract of statistics shows the population of the Timaru Electoral District to be 1059 males and 524 females, 280 houses and buildings, 1433 horses, 9117 horned cattle, and 460,907 sheep.

#### REPRESENTATIVES OF MOUNT COOK

In 1862, there were only 173 persons entitled to vote in the whole of South Canterbury, now divided into four electorates, Geraldine, Timaru Town, Waitangi and Mount Cook. It is said that elections had an air of a family reunion where the community gathered together to exchange views. On 16th May 1862, a gathering at Mr E. G. Stericker's Sawdon Station woolshed elected Charles Newton. The Geraldine and Waitangi elections were also held in woolsheds. When Mr Newton resigned the following year, a few electors met at Mr W. Parkerson's woolshed near Burkes Pass to elect his successor.

The following is a complete list of Mount Cook representatives on the Canterbury Provincial Council:

1862-1863: Charles Newton (generally known as "Billy") was the first manager of Richmond Station.

1863-1866: John Hall. He had represented Christchurch Country from 1853 to 1857, and Heathcote from 1857 to 1860. After a break of three years he represented Mount Cook from 1863 to 1866, and then Rakaia until 1873. He was the first mayor of Christchurch, and Premier of New Zealand from 1879 to 1882. He was knighted K.C.M.G. in 1882.

1866-1867: Isaac Brentnall Sheath took his seat on the council on 19th October 1866, resigning on 14th November 1867. He later represented Timaru Town for 12 days in 1870, but under what circumstances is not known.

1867-1870: Walter Kennaway is described as a runholder, provincial politician and civil servant. In 1874, he became secretary to the New Zealand Agent General in London, a position which he held for 35 years. He was knighted in 1909.

1870-1872: Alfred Kingsford Matson. In 1865, George Matson took over the Mt Nessing run, and after his death it was transferred to Alfred in 1869. Together with Mr R. Parkerson, he represented Mt Cook on the Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works.

1872-1874: Charles Perring.

1874-1876: George Babington Parker. This gentleman represented Waitangi from 1870 to 1874. He also represented Waimate on the Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works. He bought land in Waihao Valley.

## WHEN THE ROAD BOARDS WERE FORMED

Following the arrival of John Hay and his bride in 1857, and the establishing of sheep farming in the Mackenzie, the number of stock increased at a high rate. An inspection completed on 8th November 1859 gave the number of sheep at 17,500.

Of public works expenditure to 30th June 1864, it would appear that the total value was £595; Waitaki-Tekapo ferry £20, Mackenzie country £353; Mount Cook district £27 and Tekapo £195. In 1858, recommended works included the road to Timaru and the Waitangi, and a dray track into the Mackenzie country. Road gangs were carrying on with this work in October of that year. Roads throughout the province had been very hard in the winter of 1858, being deep in mud, which afterwards caked hard.

Roads surveyed in 1864 totalled 508 miles in the whole province, a mere 158 for South Canterbury, of which the length from the junction at Washdyke to Tekapo by Burkes Pass was 60 miles.

Now follows the remarkable story of the Mount Cook Road Board, which was one of four such boards created by the Canterbury Provincial Council under The Road Districts Ordinance No. 1, 1863, which passed its third reading on 17th September of that year.

# 2

## The Mount Cook Road Board

### THE FIRST ROAD BOARD MEETINGS

The first meeting of the Mount Cook Road Board was held on 15th April 1864 at Sawdon Station. The previous February, the members elected were Thomas Arthur Clowes, Henry John Gladstone (a cousin of the British prime minister, W. E. Gladstone), John Tucker Ford, John Hay and Frederick William Teschemaker.

The minutes of the meetings were hand written in a hard-back note book measuring 7in by 4½in. They were written by the chairman of each meeting, but well set out with mover and seconder correctly recorded, and whether or not the motion was carried. At the first meeting there were three persons present, and that seems to have been the pattern of attendance right through. Those attending were Messrs Hay, Ford and Teschemaker. Mr Teschemaker was appointed chairman and Mr L. J. Kennaway treasurer, although he does not appear to have been a member. As Henry J. Gladstone had resigned and not taken office, Mr James Parkerson was appointed in his place. Messrs Teschemaker, Clowes, and the newly appointed Parkerson were the sole members attending the second meeting. Mr Burrell Parkerson was appointed a member the following October.

It seems that members came and went with monotonous regularity. At a meeting of ratepayers in January 1865, only nine months after the first meeting of the board, Messrs B. and J. Parkerson and T. A. Clowes resigned by rotation. Charles Ensor and Isaac B. Sheath, together with James Parkerson were elected. Messrs Ensor and Sheath resigned at the next meeting, and T. A. Clowes was appointed again. Mr E. H. Maude was also appointed. At a meeting of ratepayers in April 1867, Messrs A. K. Matson, Parkerson and Clowes retired by rotation. Matson and Clowes were re-elected, and William Parkerson replaced James Parkerson who had retired.

The first chairman, Frederick William Teschemaker, had an interesting career. In 1857, he and Thomas Teschemaker took up 20,000 acres at Haldon run. They were of a Dutch family who emigrated from Holland to Dutch Guinea in the seventeenth century. After the death of their father they lived in Exmouth, Devon, for some years and then emigrated to New Zealand. On the advice of Hugh Fraser, the Teschemaker Brothers took up Haldon, named after Haldon Hills in Exmouth. They sold the run in 1868. After being chairman of the Mount Cook Board from 1864 to 1867, Frederick became a member of the Canterbury Provincial Council, representing Waitangi from

1874 to 1876 when the provincial councils were abolished. He represented Gladstone in Parliament from 20th January 1876 to 21st November 1878 when he died.

The first meeting got down to business immediately. A tender of £60 submitted by Mr Ostler to make a ratepayers roll and assessment of the Mount Cook district was accepted. An application was then made to the Government for £300 to establish a ferry across the Takapo [sic] and also to request £60 per annum to assist in running it. Another £200 was applied for in order to make and repair the roads near Burkes Pass and provide for assessor's contract. Mr William Williamson was requested to lay off the road from the point of Single Hill to Lake Takapo [sic] also the main road across the Plain from Single Hill to River Takapo [sic], and specifications of necessary works thereon.

#### “RATEPAYERS” WHO PAID NO RATES

The income of the Board was 25% of proceeds of land sales within its limits, paid regularly by the Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works, regular grants from the Provincial Government, and special grants for specific purposes. The Board's opposition to the levying of rates on the property owners was consistent, and not until 1882 were rates levied. Public meetings were also held on ratepayers voicing their opposition.

The first rumblings of dissatisfaction appear in a minute dated 8th January 1866, when the Board passed a resolution “That this Road Board do protest against the proposal of the Provincial Government to apportion to its own use only 25 per cent of the revenue arising from the land sales in the district, and not of the whole territorial revenue. In the case of Mount Cook district especially, their proposal, if carried out, would be a great injustice as its revenue is solely derived from the pastoral rents.” It was resolved to send the resolution to the secretary for Public Works. This would be before the formation of the Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works.

Then at a meeting of ratepayers held on 16th April 1866, it was passed “that this meeting do protest against the intention of the Government to force a rate out of the inhabitants of the district, and are resolved to resist the same to the utmost, the district being strictly pastoral.” Two years later the Board proved as good as its word. Education was the responsibility of the Provincial Government at the time. At the Board meeting of 14th October 1868, a circular from the Provincial Government was read concerning an education rate. It was “Resolved unanimously that the Board decline to collect the rate, and at the same time express their opinion that a rate of 4d in the pound is excessive especially in this district.” Estimates at the time showed Mount Cook district with an annual value of rateable property assessed for 1867 at £18,688 from which a rate of 4d in the £ would raise £311.

Early statistics relating to the district show that in the year 1864 there were 4 ratepayers, rateable property with an annual value of £36. On 30th June 1865, these had risen to 27 ratepayers, 17 rateable properties, with the number of sheep on the ratepayers' roll at 146,316.

In 1877, a letter from Mr W. Postlethwaite, chairman of the Geraldine County Council, requested the total value of rateable property in the district, and what rates had been received and collected. A telegram from the secretary

for the Colonial Treasury requested the same information. It was decided to supply the information, and inform them there had been no rate struck yet in the district. In April 1879, the Geraldine County Council asked for information about rates etc. collected in the Mount Cook district. It was decided not to give the information.

The first two years of the Board's activities from 4th June 1864 right through to 31st December 1866, showed income as £1375 made up entirely of Government grants, and expenditure of 26 items totalling £1316/13/6, leaving a balance of £58/6/6 in the bank. This was audited by the Provincial Auditor, John Olliver. For the year 1881, there was an opening balance of £14,278/5/11, receipts £594/2/5, expenditure £4247/16/-, leaving a balance in hand of £10,624/12/4. The accumulation of funds by Road Boards caused a stir when it was revealed that the Waimate Road Board had a balance of between £25,000 and £30,000. The *Timaru Herald* suggested that vested interests had allowed this money to accumulate, by preventing the much needed Waimate Gorge to tap the Waihao plains from being constructed.

While no such accusations were made in the Mount Cook district, the fact remained that in 1874 the Board had £7000 to invest, and this rose to a peak of £13,250 in 1877. Meanwhile, in 1876, there was an interesting development. The Board's bankers, the Bank of New Zealand, offered 6% interest, but it was found out that the Union Bank of Australia would pay 6½%. The Board decided to call tenders. It seems that the National Bank of New Zealand was interested, but the investment remained with the Bank of New Zealand, on what terms the minutes do not reveal.

Notwithstanding these considerations, the necessity of conforming to the rating system caught up with the Board in 1882. In March of that year, a letter was received from the Geraldine County Council drawing the attention of the Board to the fact that under the present practice of not striking a rate, the whole cost of maintaining Hospital and Charitable Aid was borne by the Levels and Temuka road districts, the only districts in the county in which rates were levied. Mr McGregor gave notice that at the next Board meeting, he would propose that a rate of 3d in the pound be levied in the Mount Cook district for the year 1882. This was agreed to in April.

However, the Geraldine County Council was apparently not aware of this decision, as in June a letter was received by the Board, stating that unless a rate was struck to meet the Hospital and Charitable Aid expenditure, the council would strike a rate throughout the county. It was then agreed that Mr Thomas Caskey be appointed receiver of rates at Fairlie Creek for all small rates under £1 and that he be offered 10% commission. The rate struck as the Board went out of existence was a farthing in the pound.

#### TIMARU AND GLADSTONE BOARD OF WORKS

The Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works Act, passed in September 1867, gave South Canterbury direct supervision and control of public works, including roads, bridges and harbour works. It received and disbursed a fixed 25% of the proceeds of land sales within its limits. The passage of the bill met with stern opposition, those opposing it claiming that it would be the death-warrant of the provinces. Judging in retrospect, one could ask if their claim was prophetic.

The ratepayers of the Mount Cook district annually elected two representatives to the Board. The elections were usually held on the 1st December, and those who served were: Alfred Kingston Matson, Richard Parkerson, Frederick J. Kimbell, Dr Thomas Fisher, Melville J. Gray, Donald McLean, William Sherwood Raine, Phillip H. Russell and William H. Ostler. The minutes of the Board show the following amounts received from the Board of Works. In the main the amounts were a proportion of land sales, but a grant and some adjustments were occasionally involved.

	£	s	d		£	s	d
October 1873	1642	1	6	May 1875	260	6	0
February 1874	1603	2	6	August 1875	107	16	5
April 1874	1447	6	6	October 1875	143	9	0
May 1874	2361	14	0	December 1875	217	17	0
June 1874	1720	9	0	January 1876	18	0	0
July 1874	1661	0	0	March 1876	519	15	0
August 1874	130	12	6	April 1876	1118	5	0
September 1874	955	14	0	May 1876	607	10	0
October 1874	256	6	0	June 1876	681	6	0
November 1874	523	18	6	July 1876	1421	11	0
December 1874	243	6	2	September 1876	1856	19	0
February 1875	44	3	6	October 1876	1129	19	0
March 1875	75	1	0	December 1876	1039	9	0

In a letter dated 22nd November 1876, the Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works advised that through Section 213 of the Counties Bill, there would be no necessity for electing members to sit on the Board. A further letter advised that the sum of £1000 had been set aside to the credit of the Mount Cook and Levels Road Boards for the construction of the connection of the Pareora Gorge Road to the Cave Station.

#### PUNTS AND FERRIES

##### TEKAPO FERRY

Punts and ferries as a means of communication were the concern of both the early settlers and the Board. The earliest official record is that the Provincial Government entered into an agreement with John Hay to conduct a ferry across the Tekapo where it issued into the lake for a year ending 1862. The charges were fixed at: foot passengers 1/- each; horsemen 2/6 each; drays 5/- each; merchandise 10/- a ton; wool 1/- a bale; and stock by arrangement. The following year Thomas Wadsworth took it over, and obtained a liquor licence, an accommodation house to be erected on the east bank of the stream. Apparently he built the accommodation house, but did not see out his three-year term lease.

At the first meeting of the Road Board in April 1864, it was resolved that the Provincial Government be applied to for the sum of £300 in order to establish a ferry across the Tekapo, and also to request that a sum of £60 a year be granted to assist in working the ferry. Then, in July 1864, a tender for the working of the ferry and keeping the accommodation house was accepted. The applicant was John Hay. In January 1865 it was reported that he had carried out his contract to erect a "ferry house etc." Also, in

May of that year, £35 was paid to a Mr Breakwell who had completed the punt for the Tekapo ferry, and a Frank Black was paid £10 for draying the punt to Lake Tekapo.

The next record is that in 1873 the Board opened seven tenders for the lease of the Tekapo ferry, the successful applicant being Andrew Corran, on the grounds of his being so highly recommended by the residents of the district, and his offer as to improvements being a very fair one. Then in July 1876, when the leasing of the ferry was put out to tender again, there were fifteen applicants, and of these Donald McLeod was successful. At that time the Board was pressing the Government to provide a new punt.

In October 1877, the ferry decking, supported on two boats, was 30ft long and 10ft wide, and capable of carrying two or three teams, and crossed the stream opposite the hotel. This carried the traffic until the bridge was opened in September 1880.

In the meantime, charges for the ferry from 21st August 1879 were: foot passengers, 1/- each; horses, 1/- each; horsemen, 1/- each; sheep not exceeding 100, 1d per head; sheep exceeding 100, £1 per 1000; merchandise, 5/- per ton; timber, coal and iron, 3/- per ton; wool, including storage, 6d per bale; loaded horse or bullock wagon including team and driver, 10/- each; empty horse or bullock wagon, a load of 10 cwt to be considered empty, 5/- each; loaded horse or bullock dray with team and driver limited to four horses or bullocks, 5/- each; empty dray with team and driver, a load of 5 cwt to be considered empty, 2/6 each; traps with single horse including all contents and occupants, 2/- each; traps with two horses including all contents and occupants, 3/- each.

Note: A fare crossing the ferry is allowed to re-cross over the same day without further charge. Exemptions: All ministers of religion, members and officers of the Mount Cook Road Board, Her Majesty's mail and mailmen, constables and prisoners.

#### PUKAKI FERRY

A ford used to cross the Pukaki seems to have been midway between the outlet of the lake and its junction with the Tekapo river. It is known that Hugh Fraser had a five-oared whaleboat which was used as a stock and passenger ferry, and that he kept it moored near the Lake Pukaki outlet. To what extent this was used is hard to say. In 1875, the Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works applied to the Provincial Council for the establishment of a punt across the Pukaki, not at the lake outlet, which was unsuitable, but a site further east "in a direct line with the Otago road".

Two large boats for the Pukaki ferry were despatched from Timaru in February 1876. They were 30ft long and had a beam of 10ft. A decking built across the boats formed a punt capable of carrying three tons. It operated where the river flowed from the lake. Two steel cables anchored to each bank spanned the 150 yards stretch of water, and ropes attached to these cables held the ferry.

In April 1876, there were fourteen applicants for the lease of the ferry. Four were selected and it was left to Messrs Kimbell and Ostler, two of the Road Board members, to make the final selection. The successful applicant is not named. Ferry fees were: passengers, 1/- each; horsemen 2/6; dray 5/-;

wool 1/- a bale; and merchandise 10/- a ton. Special arrangements had to be made for stock transport. The Pukaki ferry, then operated by Thomas Riddle, was closed in 1895 when the bridge was completed.

When the bridge was opened it was said that this punt ferry service, besides being troublesome, was often the cause of serious delays, owing to eddies in the river preventing the punt being easily put across. In some cases the punt had been worked to the middle of the river with a load, and was there stuck fast by wind and current for hours, unable to be moved either way.

### THE TEKAPO BRIDGE

The Tekapo bridge, described as an exceptionally fine one, was built to cross the Tekapo River at the outlet of the lake.

Two reports were presented, one on the 30th May 1874 showing that the length of the bridge required was 250 feet, and another in February 1875 from J. Rochfort, engineer of the Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works. He bored the riverbed near the lake, and found it to consist of pure "pipeclay" for 14 feet, without stones, so that wooden piles could be driven or screw piles used. He thought that owing to snowfall a wooden bridge would be less durable than elsewhere, and recommended an iron structure. The Board thereupon decided to recommend the construction of an iron screw pile bridge.

The bridge was finally built at a cost of £5000. It was a suspension bridge on concrete piers, built on the Ordish suspension system, with a central span of 150 feet and two end spans of 75 feet each. The two piers consisted of a pair of cement columns 40 feet in height from the foundation blocks, 6 feet in diameter, and of circular section to the roadway 21 feet above the foundation, and of decreasing diameter, with angular fluted sections, to the tops, the weight of each column being about 60 tons. The roadway was 14 feet in the clear.

The bridge was designed and constructed by the Road Board's engineer, Mr F. W. Marchant, who contributed a paper on the subject to the Institution of Civil Engineers. The Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works went out of existence in 1876.

The bridge was opened for traffic on 7th September 1880. Andersen in his *Jubilee History of South Canterbury* gives an illuminating picture of what the bridge must have meant to the settlers of that time in these words: "Among the visitors was John Burgess, then residing at Burke's Pass, who was said to be the first to transport stores and produce across the river at this point. Nearly 21 years previously Joseph Beswick stocked the station, afterwards known as Glenmore, and on the first day of the year 1860 Burgess unloaded from his bullock dray and on the north side of the river, at the site of the bridge, a whale-boat which was to serve as a means of communication. He swam his bullocks across the river and ferried over their gear and a sledge, on which he loaded his stores and dragged them thence to the station, a distance of about six miles. After shearing he conveyed the wool, two bales at a time, to the river, boated them over, and when a dray load had thus been boated, he swam his team and brought the load to Timaru. Up till the time the bridge was built, the cost of upkeep of the punts was nearly £200 a year."

## FLOODS AND STORMS

According to Andersen in *Jubilee History of South Canterbury* the winter of 1867 was the worst sheepowners had experienced since the settlement of the country. Early on Monday morning, 29th July 1867, rains commenced, and soon the gullies through Timaru were streaming with water. The Temuka and Pareora were unfordable, cutting off all communication north and south.

On 2nd and 3rd February 1868, there were again violent storms followed by the heaviest flood known, involving much loss of property and ten human lives. The road at Burkes Pass was completely destroyed, the Mackenzie district being quite cut off. The newly formed road just beyond Cave, costing £600-£700, was also destroyed. Andersen says that the damage in the Mount Cook district was estimated at £2000. This figure was supplied to the secretary for Public Works, and also to the Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works, and was made up as follows:

Between head of Burkes Pass and Three Springs Station	£500
Three Springs Station to Walden's Accommodation House	£300
Walden's Accommodation House to the Cave	£600
Other roads in Mackenzie country	£200

To this was added a rider to the effect that to cover the cost of restoring roads to their former state would be £1500 to £2000.

## AN EARLY AMALGAMATION PROPOSAL

On 7th March 1876, the Mount Cook Road Board received a letter from Mr James Alexander Cunningham, the chairman of the Ashley Road Board, introducing resolutions of their board in the matter of the future amalgamation of the district.

It was proposed by Mr W. H. Ostler and seconded by Mr J. McGregor, and carried, that the clerk write to the Ashley Road Board to the effect that this Board is not prepared to express an opinion as to the desirability or otherwise of amalgamation, but is decidedly opposed to anything in the nature of a Provincial Board of Works, preferring some other form of administration.

## AN ODD BANKING REQUEST

On 21st September 1875, a letter was received from Mr R. Chisholm, the manager of the Bank of New Zealand, complaining of the inconvenience caused by cheques being payable to order and requesting that for the future cheques may be to bearer as before. Mr Gray proposed, and Mr Dennistoun seconded, that the clerk write to Mr Chisholm informing him that cheques up to £20 in value will be payable to bearer, but cheques over that sum will be paid to order, and to request him to honor [sic] all such cheques.

## A FORWARD DRIVE

Although steady progress had been made in the development and repairs of roading, it seems that under the chairmanship of Mr Wm Cunningham Smith (as he invariably signed himself in the minute book), a drive was made to have certain works carried out. In March 1873, a discussion took place on a letter from the secretary of Public Works relating to laying off roads through the district. The chairman was instructed to recommend the following roads: Mackenzie Pass Road, Tekapo Road, Waitangi Road, Whales Back Road,

Richmond Road, Mount Cook Road, Hakataramea Pass Road, Hakataramea Valley Road, road from Waitangi Station to punt, road from Opawa Station to Cannington, road up Spencers Valley, road from Cave to Pareora woolshed, and road up Little Opawa Stream.

The clerk (Mr George Cooke) was directed to supply more minute information regarding these roads from the maps in the Lands Office, Timaru.

From funds in hand it was decided there and then:

That £50 be granted to the Hakataramea Station for road over the pass provided that the station subscribe £25.

That £200 be granted for the Richmond Road on the understanding that residents subscribe £100.

That £200 be voted to the Tekapo Ferry Road.

That £100 be voted for punt approaches at Tekapo ferry.

That £200 be granted towards the Mount Cook Road.

That £20 be granted to Mr Fraser for road between Black Forest and Haldon Station.

That £60 be voted to the Opuha Road.

That £900 be expended on the main road between Three Springs and the Cave, such expenditure to include the surveyed road through Three Springs and cuttings on the Albury Downs.

Following the above, the acceptance of tenders was a regular feature of the Board's decisions.

May 1873	Tender accepted for main road John Forgan	£641/2/-
August 1873	Tender for road works accepted Thomas Jefcoate	£588/10/6
September 1873	Tender for Cave-Pareora Road John Forgan	£345/18/-
October 1873	Tender for Richmond and Tekapo ferry roads John Forgan	£535/17/-
October 1873	Tender retaining wall to Cave culvert John Hope	£71/6/-
October 1873	Work between McAlisters and the Cave. Tender for £1011/10/- declined as excessive, but in May 1874: John Gibson, £652/10/-, accepted.	
October 1873	Tender Mount Cook Road - Mr Burnett's John Martin	£300/10/4

In December 1873, a letter was received from the Geraldine Road Board requesting co-operation for a grant of £5000 for the completion of Kakahu Road. It was decided that the chairman write to the Provincial Council to that effect.

Meanwhile it was decided to make extra grants to distribute a sum of £1000 discovered to be available in the Board's funds:

Hakataramea Pass	£50 further grant
Richmond Road	£200 further grant
Hodgkinsons Road	£150
Dark Brothers	£150
Mount Cook	£200 further grant
Cave and Pareora	£200

It was agreed that the condition of Richmond and Hakataramea contributing be done away with.

Earlier contracts had included:

October 1868	Repairing main road, Cave to Tekapo ferry	
	William Forgan	£175/-/-
August 1870	Cave culverts	
	R. Simpson and others	£507/7/2
November 1872	Retaining walls, Cave culverts	
	R. B. Silby	£143/3/-

### PUBLIC WORKS TENDERS ACCEPTED

The minutes of the Mount Cook Road Board from 1874 to 1883 reveal increasing activity in the district, tapering off again as the years go by. This schedule gives some indication of the rapid development of county roads during this period, and the planning of the network with which we are now familiar. It must not be imagined that these roads were like they are now. All that was required in those days was the laying out of roads, these being shingled sufficiently to take horse and buggy traffic. There are many items in addition to those given below which are not included, as there is a mere reference to a contract number without saying what the contract was for. Some of these were for substantial sums of money.

1874		
Between Hamilton and Opihi		
John Gibson	£586/13/4	
Three Springs and Opihi River		
on Sherwood Downs Road		
F. French	£87/10/-	
Between Coal Gully and Fairlie Creek		
A. Wadsworth	£426/6/-	
Between Opihi river and the main		
Mackenzie country road		
A. Wadsworth	£733/3/4	
Burkes Pass and Black Forest		
A. Wadsworth	£978/-/-	
Between McLeods and Old Albury		
station		
A. Wadsworth	£457/16/8	
Between the Cave and McAlisters		
John Gibson	£652/10/-	
1875		
Kakahu to Burkes Pass Road		
Thomas Blair	£348/14/8	
Waitangi Road from Grays Hills		
to Little Pass		
John Connor	£306/-/-	
Rollsby Road		
Robert Forgan	£161/3/-	
Opawa Road		
John Coll	£164/10/6	
1876		
Pukaki to Tekapo Crossing		
Thomas Blair	£72/15/-	
Tekapo Crossing to Whales Back		
	J. B. Connor	£100/16/10
Albury Downs (roading, culverts, etc.)		
	J. B. Connor	£539/16/8
Metal on main road between Opawa		
and lower mouth of Burkes Pass:		
No. 1 and No. 2 contracts:		
Thomas Blair	£317/6/8	
Thomas Blair	£453/6/8	
Clayton Road		
Thomas Jefcoate	£296/1/-	
Opawa Road		
John Gibson	£361/-/-	
1877		
Three unidentified contracts:		
	John Sugrue	£824/-/-
	F. Parham	£1023/5/-
	Michael Corkery	£258/19/-
Main road between Opawa and Albury		
Robert Forgan	£647/11/8	
Waitangi Road		
George Foster	£161/10/-	
Ashwick and Sherwood Downs road		
Thomas Blair	£27/-/-	
Coal Creek Road		
Thomas Jefcoate	£90/-/-	
Between Patersons and Opawa		
Thomas Jefcoate	£124/-/-	
Opihi and junction, Clayton Road		
Gibson and Campbell	£64/7/4	
Opihi Crossing to Paddy's Market		
Gibson and Campbell	£694/3/-	

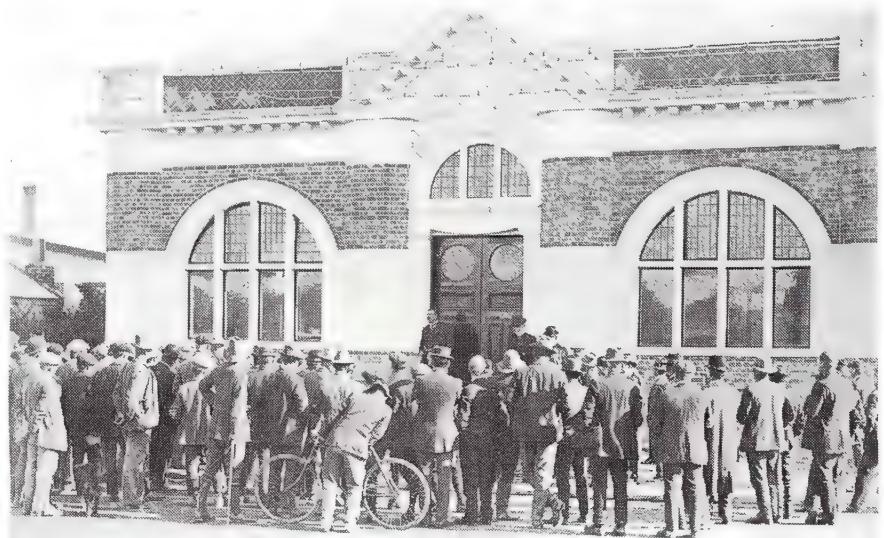
Paddy's Market continued		
Patrick Burke	£389/1/6	
Tekapo to Glenmore		
John Corkery	£219/13/4	
Fork river to end of Tekapo Downs		
F. Poff	£330/-/-	
Cutting at Tekapo ferry		
William Low	£72/12/6	
Fairlie Creek Road		
Robert Forgan	£241/1/-	
Road up Little Creek Road		
W. McCully and Co.	£185/-/-	
Fork River to Pukaki Road		
John Corkery	£475/11/4	
Road leading to D. Blue		
W. McCully and Co.	£77/11/9	
Rollesby Road		
John Burgess	£43/4/8	
Culvert and pipes, main road		
Robert Forgan	£1060/19/11	
Stony Creek to Whales Back gate		
Michael Corkery	£971/13/-	
Whales Back gate to Burkes Pass		
Robert Forgan	£780/18/-	
Coal Creek Valley Road		
Thomas Jefcoate	£421/6/-	
Sawdon Road		
Gibson and Campbell	£460/4/-	
Rutherford Road		
W. McCully and Co.	£91/9/6	
Young's Gully		
Thomas Jefcoate	£48/-/-	
1878		
Braemar to Maryburn		
Robert Forgan	£315/19/-	
Lilybank to Tekapo station		
Robert Forgan	£459/1/6	
Cave Hill to Pareora River		
Gibson and Campbell	£668/5/2	
Albury Bush Road		
Patrick Burke	£68/7/6	
McKenzie [sic] Pass Road		
Gibson and Campbell	£344/9/-	
Probably Silverstream Road		
Wm Stevenson	£341/19/-	
Probably Cooper Valley		
John Corkery	£367/8/-	
Probably Gosling's Road		
Patrick Burke	£354/19/6	
Culverts, main road		
Robert Forgan	£727/10/-	
Road to Shaw's farm		
Robert Forgan	£226/4/8	
Albury railway station		
Cornelius Flynn	£58/13/9	
Coal Gully Road		
Michael Corkery	£513/1/-	
Additions to Pukaki ferry house		
Thomas Foden	£185/-/-	
1879		
Bridge and culvert, McKenzie		
[sic] Pass		
John Gibson	£380/-/-	
Mountnessing Road [sic]		
Robert Forgan	£678/1/5	
McKenzie Valley Road		
John Corkery	£126/4/-	
Allandale Road		
E. Cunningham	£56/5/3	
Three Springs and Ashwick Road		
E. Cunningham	£62/19/4	
McKenzie Pass Valley		
Robert Forgan	£723/13/11	
Ashwick Farm Road		
E. Cunningham	£192/17/4	
Albury Road		
John Corkery	£289/17/8	
Te Raupo Road		
Robert Forgan	£229/10/-	
Coal Creek Road		
Michael Corkery	£532/13/2	
Mountnessing Road [sic]		
Risk and Morkham	£155/-/-	
Between Rutherfords and Patersons		
Robert Forgan	£514/17/4	
Waitangi Road		
J. and M. Corkery	£666/11/-	
Main Road, Lower		
Gibson and Campbell	£315/-/-	
Main Road, Upper		
Gibson and Campbell	£3036/-/-	
Renewal of Pukaki punt		
R. B. Mason	£275/-/-	
Rollsby Valley Road		
Robert Forgan	£1529/4/1	
Burnetts Road		
Thomas Jefcoate	£513/-/-	
Formation, Braemar Road		
J. and M. Corkery	£1027/18/6	
Formation, D. Blue's Road		
O'Connor and Prindiville	£82/6/-	
Formation Pareora Road and		
Cave Road		
John Callmann	£122/17/6	
Little Opawa Valley Road		
Robert Forgan	£1109/0/7	
Widening road in Horse Shoe Bend		
on Main Road between Three		
Springs Road and Burkes Pass		
O'Connor and Prindiville	£297/6/4	
Pukaki punt to Mr Ostlers		
J. and M. Corkery	£291/-/-	
Pukaki punt to Messrs Dark's		
Robert Forgan	£637/5/-	
Pukaki punt work		
Robert Forgan	£687/4/-	
Claytons Road		
Edward Connihan	£298/2/6	



B. J. O'NEILL  
Chairman: Mackenzie County Council—1977-1983



BURKES PASS OFFICE



OPENING OF MACKENZIE COUNTY COUNCIL CHAMBERS—FAIRLIE

Rollsby Valley			
John Callanan	£789/16/-		
Rock cutting at foot of Burkes Pass			
John Johnstone	£603/12/8		
Probably Mackenzie Pass Road			
J. and M. Corkery	£443/14/-		
Silverstream Valley Road Extension			
J. Callanan	£237/15/-		
Tekapo Bridge contract			
R. B. Silby	£4995/5/8		
Ford Flat to Mistake Station			
J. and M. Corkery	£429/10/-		
Maryburn to Newlands			
O'Connor and Prindiville	£307/3/4		
		1880	
Main Road between Burkes Pass township and Sawdon Creek			
J. and M. Corkery	£1350/4/6		
Road to Braemar Co. and Newlands Flaherty and Callanan	£628/15/-		
Mettalling Ashwick Flat			
J. and M. Corkery	£540/5/-		
Contract No. 28 (not identified)			
O. Blake	£268/-/-		
Contract No. 32			
O'Connor and Prindiville	£468/15/-		
Contract No. 34			
Michael Lynch	£250/19/8		
Contract No. 37			
P. Blake	£426/5/10		
		1881	
Ashwick farm road to district boundary			
Annis and Keeffe	£33/2/-		
O'Neill's Road on Albury Downs			
M. Lynch	£253/-/-		
		1882	
Forming O'Neill's Road			
O'Connor and Prindiville	£67/-/-		
Footbridge on the Allandale Road at Fairlie Creek			
R. B. Silby	£206/18/6		
Hennesseys Road and graveling Opihi Gorge Road			
M. Corkery	£120/18/4		
		1883	
Track from Braemar Station home- stead to the Clay Cliff Creek			
M. Corkery	£187/10/-		

### ALBURY - FAIRLIE CREEK RAILWAY

It would appear that there was a tortuous struggle between the Road Board and the Government pressing the latter to complete the railway between Albury and Fairlie Creek. The laying of a line from Pleasant Point to Albury was commenced on 7th January 1876, and completed on 21st October. A public meeting was held at Silverstream on 1st August 1877 to urge the extending of the line to Burkes Pass. The construction of the line from Albury onwards was commenced on 8th July 1879 and gave work to a large number of unemployed then in Timaru, about 100 altogether.

In May 1881, the Minister of Public Works was urged to have the line between Albury and Fairlie Creek open for traffic before February next (1882) if possible; otherwise the line would be deprived of the heavy traffic in wool and grain, which would yield a considerable sum of money to the Railway Department. This was too much to expect, which resulted in the Road Board receiving a petition in March concerning the railway and another matter of local interest. The petition was from the Fairlie Creek school committee and residents, asking the Board to use their influence in urging upon Government to have the Albury-Fairlie Creek railway proceeded with in a more vigorous manner than had hitherto been done.

The petitioners were informed that the Board had already written to the Minister of Public Works three times, urging upon him the necessity of having the line completed, without eliciting any further reply than the Board's communication would be considered. It was decided to write to the Government

again, pointing out the injustice done to the district, by the dilatory way in which the work was carried on, and the great loss the Railway Department must sustain in consequence of being unable to carry the very heavy traffic in wool and grain which was raised in the district.

Things must have proceeded slowly, as in August 1883 the member for Gladstone (Mr Sutter) was requested to get a definite statement "if possible" from the Minister of Public Works as to what date the railway would be open for the carriage of goods and passengers to the Fairlie terminus. The following month Mr Sutter reported that he had done everything in his power to get the construction of the railway pushed on as fast as possible, and also that a contract had been let for the erection of station buildings at Fairlie Creek. The opening of the line to Fairlie Creek was celebrated by an excursion on 30th January 1884.

#### TIMARU HARBOUR BOARD

It is evident that the whole of South Canterbury realised right from its beginning the value of the Timaru Harbour Board to the district. The Harbour Board was constituted on 1st January 1877, following the abolition of the provinces. Its constitution was five members representing Timaru town, including the mayor, and one each from the Road Boards, Levels, Temuka, Geraldine, Waimate, Mount Peel and Mount Cook. The Mount Cook Board appointed Mr P. H. Russell but soon he resigned in April, Mr Edward Acton being appointed in his place. Mr Acton served the Harbour Board until 1893, and was for the last six years its chairman. However, Mr Acton represented Mount Cook only until 1881 when Mr Thomas Teschemaker succeeded him.

The feeling of goodwill in the district was shown in June 1881, when a letter was received from the Harbour Board regarding a proposed endowment for the Timaru harbour reconstruction. Mr McGregor proposed, and Mr J. H. Raine seconded, that the Road Board will be happy to do anything in their power in order to get a grant of land from the Government in aid of Timaru harbour works.

Apparently this referred to a proposal that the Government should endow the Harbour Board with all the land between the railway and the sea from the breakwater to Whales Creek, the Government reserving only sufficient for a double line. They also wanted the sanction of Parliament to the permanent endowment of the Harbour Board with the remainder of the reclaimed land, and also any land that may be reclaimed in the future.

#### ROAD BOARD OFFICES: BURKES PASS

Initially the Road Board had no offices, and the venue of the meetings varied. The first six meetings were at Sawdon Station. Many meetings were held at the accommodation house, variously named at Burgen's, Stansell's, and Walley's. Others were held at Rollesby Station, Ashwick Station, Three Springs Station, Brown and Maude's, Mathias and Ensor's, and Spalding's Store. The accommodation house and Rollesby predominate. There was a meeting described merely as at Timaru, another in the Royal Hotel, Timaru, and yet another at Mr Williamson's office in Timaru.

Reminiscing at the time of the opening of the new offices in Fairlie in 1913, Mr McGregor gave a vivid description of the primitive conditions in which the Board originally operated. He said that when he first entered public life

in January 1876 accommodation consisted in the use of a room in the local pub for the day when the meeting was held. A small tin box about 2ft square comprised all their furniture and effects. When a meeting was over, all was packed in this box, including books etc., locked up and put away in a corner of the room till next meeting the following month. They depended on the generosity of the Geraldine County Council for funds, which were very limited. They had to pay for lunch and horse feed out of their own pockets.

In April 1875, Mr D. West, architect, submitted an estimated cost of building an office according to plan as £1050. This was held over as it was impossible to build in stone in winter. Later in the year a tender from Mr Thomas Foden was accepted. The minute book shows tenders of £896/3/- for stone, and £814/5/- for concrete. The first meeting of the Board was held in the new building on 6th June 1876 with Mr Kimbell as chairman.

### FORMATION OF COUNTIES

There was definitely a change of heart on the part of the Mount Cook Road Board to county control, when we compared the stance taken in 1876 when the counties were first created and the suggestion in 1883 that the Geraldine County Council should be abolished.

In August 1876, a conference of chairmen of Road Boards was called to discuss the proposals of central government for local administration. The Mount Cook Road Board decided that Road Boards should continue as at present, with county boards analogous to the Board of Works; that is, a central board for each group of road boards. The conference, held in Christchurch, proposed that Canterbury should be divided into three counties: (1) north of the Rakaia, (2) Rakaia to Rangitata, and (3) Rangitata to Waitaki. A lengthy list of suggestions as to implementation and administration was also decided upon. The Mount Cook Board was concerned as to one aspect of the proposed division — apparently not wanting to extend too far south. It gave as its opinion "That the country to the south and west of the Ohau water shed to its head including also the Ahuriri, Hawea and Wanaka water sheds is cut off topographically from the Board's control, and would suggest that the Ohau water shed to its head be made the boundary of this county and road district."

The Counties Act was passed, dividing South Canterbury into two counties, the Geraldine and the Waimate. The Mesopotamia country was not included. The Geraldine County was a cumbersome area. The north boundary was the centre of the Rangitata River from the sea to Forest Creek, then Forest Creek to its source in the Two Thumb Range, then to the junction with the Southern Alps. Its north-west boundary ran along the Alps southward to the source of the Hopkins River. The western and southern boundary ran down the centre of the Hopkins to Lake Ohau, along the eastern side of the lake, down the centre of the Ohau and Waitaki rivers to a point about two miles below the present Black Forest Station. It then went by a straight line to the Hunter Hills, some distance north of Mount Nimrod, then by the Hunter Hills southward to Mount Nimrod, thence down the centre of the Pareora River to the sea. Its eastern boundary was the sea. The Waimate County included that smaller portion lying between the Geraldine County and the Waitaki River. The Road Boards in the Geraldine County still remained as before, maintaining their powers. This dual control could not last.

During this period from 1877 to 1883, representatives of the Mount Cook Riding on the Geraldine County Council were: 1877, Phillip H. Russell; 1878-1879, William H. Ostler; and from 1879 to 1883, George Frederick Clulee. A proposal to the Government was made early in 1878 that the riding's representation on the council should be increased, but the Colonial Secretary advised that this was impossible.

### SUGGESTED ABOLITION OF GERALDINE COUNTY

It is probably a forgotten fact that the Mount Cook Road Board suggested in 1883 that the Geraldine County should be abolished. On many occasions there was a conflict of opinion between the county and the board, particularly when it came to the question of county rates being levied for works the Board thought of no local advantage.

In August 1880, the Geraldine Road Board wrote to the Mount Cook Board, seeking its co-operation in protesting against the imposition of a county rate to bridge the Opihi River near Temuka. The Board replied that it was willing to do all it could to prevent the levying of such an unjust rate, as the construction of the Opihi bridge was purely a local work, and not for the benefit of the county at large. The Board asked Mr G. F. Clulee, its representative on the Geraldine County Council, to vote against the measure. The Geraldine Road Board thanked the Mount Cook Board for its attitude, and stated that they approved of the suggestion made by the Mount Cook Board that the Opihi railway bridge should be planked instead of a new bridge being built. It was decided to write to the Minister of Public Works along these lines, and charge those interested with the cost.

Matters came to a climax in June 1883, when the Board objected to a proposal to strike a county rate for the purpose of repairing the Rangitata bridge, as the Road Board district had no interest in common with that part of the county, either in point of traffic or otherwise. Then the resolution went on to say that the Geraldine County Council should be abolished, and its powers vested in the various road boards; the machinery for carrying on a dual system of local government in county and road boards being cumbersome and pecuniarily wasteful. The Mackenzie County Council was forthwith created in place of the Road Board on 1st October 1883. The Levels County was divided from the remaining portion in 1894.

### MOUNT COOK COUNTY OR MACKENZIE ?

At a meeting of the Mount Cook Board on 3rd September 1883, with John McGregor as chairman, and Messrs Robert Rutherford and James Milne in attendance, a letter was received from the Colonial Secretary (Hon. Thomas Dick in the Frederick Whitaker ministry) stating that he had received the petition from the ratepayers of the Mount Cook Road District praying that the district might be constituted a county under the title of Mount Cook County. He said that the petition was in order, and the requirements of the Act had been fully complied with, but objected to the title of "Mount Cook" as there was a Cook County in existence in the North Island, and there might be some confusion. He desired that the Board would suggest some other name.

It was proposed by Mr Milne and seconded by Mr Rutherford that the Hon. the Colonial Secretary be advised to substitute the name "Mackenzie County" for that in the petition, and Tekapo Riding for that termed Mackenzie Riding in the petition.

### SUPERVISION AND STAFFING

#### WILLIAM WILLIAMSON

From its inception in 1864, the Mount Cook Road Board engaged William Williamson of Timaru as its consulting engineer. Naturally, this was not a full-time appointment, and in addition he was consulting engineer to the Timaru Road Board and then the Borough Council. His civil engineering office was destroyed in the great Timaru fire of 7th December 1868. At the very first meeting of the Road Board he was requested to lay off certain roads. He was consultant right through until 1870 on roads and cuttings, metalling and repairing roads, keeping roads fit and serviceable for drayage, culverts, and other matters pertaining to the Board's activities. He was engineer to the Levels Road Board from 1868 to 1876.

#### GEORGE MATTHEW BABINGTON, OF WAIMATE

For three years, 1870 to 1873, Mr G. M. Babington was consultant engineer, his remuneration being 2½% for works for inspection and 10% for supervision etc. He was engineer and clerk to the Waimate Road Board from 1865 to his death in 1874. He laid off the Waimate Gorge Road and built bridges at Waihao Forks. He was assistant engineer to the Timaru to Temuka railway, and assisted Mrs Henry Cain, the mayoress, with the turning of the first sod on 4th October 1871. He was also consulting engineer to the Timaru and Gladstone Board of Works, and it is thought that Babington Street in Timaru was named after him.

#### GEORGE COOKE

In September 1872, Mr George Cooke was appointed first full-time clerk-overseer. He held the position for about three years. He would be about thirty years of age when he was first employed, and left in 1875. In 1876 he and John Hunter Raine took over Sherwood Downs, and it is interesting to note that on 7th December 1876 he married Mary Elizabeth Raine in St Patrick's Church at Burkes Pass. In his marriage certificate he is described as station owner, aged thirty-four, and a bachelor. Miss Raine, who was thirty, is described as a spinster, but no occupation is named. The marriage was solemnised by Rev. James Preston, vicar of Geraldine.

#### GEORGE FREDERICK CLULEE

Mr Clulee, as clerk-overseer, gave distinguished service for the next four years. The regard in which he was held is evident from a letter which was read out at the Board meeting on 6th January 1879. It was from contractors with whom Mr Clulee had dealings. It read, "The resignation of Mr G. F. Clulee as surveyor to the Board, seems to us a fit time to acknowledge the very great satisfaction we have enjoyed in executing the numerous contracts which have been entrusted to us under his supervision. His courtesy and equitable dealing in business have been so uniformly fair, that his early departure from

office is a matter for regret. Wishing him health and prosperity in his worldly pursuits, we beg to subscribe our names as under. Robert Forgan, Rick and Markham, John Corkery, Michael Corkery, Gibson and Campbell." After his resignation Mr Clulee represented the Mount Cook Riding on the Geraldine County Council from 1879 to 1883. One of the final resolutions passed by the outgoing Board was "That the thanks of this Board be conveyed to Mr Clulee, the district's late representative in the Geraldine County Council for his watchfulness of their interests and unwearying energy on their behalf." Mr Clulee owned considerable blocks of land at Burkes Pass and Silverstream. The former was near the accommodation house and on 15th January 1877, the *Herald* said that a small village had sprung up at Burkes Pass and supposed it would merge with the "Township of Clulee". Mr Clulee also represented the Mackenzie County Council on the South Canterbury Hospital Board from 1886 to 1887.

#### FREDERICK WILLIAM MARCHANT

Mr Marchant was employed as clerk-engineer from 1879, and carried on in this capacity when the county was formed until 1885. At the first election of councillors in 1883 he became the centre of a most unfortunate political squabble. When he died in 1917, the veteran John McGregor, in a tribute to him, said, "When Mr Marchant came to the district, there were no roads, only bullock dray-tracks. Laying off roads, and inspecting contracts did not give the young engineer enough scope for his engineering capabilities, and he was engaged in drawing plans for a bridge over the Tekapo River, at the mouth of the lake. The present [1917] fine suspension bridge was the result of those plans, a lasting memorial to his skilful engineering. The trouble in carrying out the work in those days was very great, neither contractor nor man having had experience at such work — the first suspension bridge built in the colony."

#### CASUAL STAFF

The employment of staff is not mentioned until early 1873, when a Mr Charles Garnahan (or Garnham) was employed as a road repairer. He was on the pay-roll for about twelve months, but there is no mention of a replacement. Then, in May 1875, the Board engaged Mr J. Collier as surfaceman at 50/- a week, and the clerk was instructed to buy a horse and cart for the use of the Board. At the same time it was decided to engage Mr H. Dunstan, if willing to work for the Board at a rate of 45/- a week without rations. Dunstan left the following December, but John Collier stayed with the Board apparently till November 1877. Road gangs were gradually built up over the years, prominent names being D. Lott, H. Belcher, J. Kieffe, J. O'Connor and J. Belither.

#### MEMBERS AND CHAIRMEN

A complete list is given in Appendix I.

# 3

## The John McGregor Era

### THE COUNTY'S FIRST ELECTION

*Train up a fig tree in the way it should go, and when you  
are old sit under the shade of it.*

— Charles Dickens (*Dombey and Son*)

The outgoing Mount Cook Road Board comprised five members, John McGregor (chairman), Robert Rutherford, John Scott Rutherford, James Imlay Milne, and Ernest Arthur Chapman. One could be excused in assuming that these gentlemen would be the nucleus of the new council, but this was not to be. Acrimonious debate, although confined to the Fairlie Riding, eliminated Robert Rutherford and J. I. Milne, and E. A. Chapman was not a candidate. The debate which followed was dubbed by the *Timaru Herald* as Rutherford v Richardson, and reference to "roll up on the 17th" refers to the election which took place on 17th November 1883. The main bone of contention was whether or not the Board's clerk-engineer, Mr F. W. Marchant, should be allowed private practice. Scathing advertisements appeared in the *Herald*, and the correspondence columns hummed with charges and counter-charges.

### "NO HOLDS BARRED" ADVERTISING

Judging in retrospect, the advertisements are entertaining — though serious at the time. There were three in all, a main one urging the electors to vote for Struthers, Gray, Richardson and J. S. Rutherford, another for Milne, R. Rutherford and Snushall, and a third one not sponsoring anyone in particular.

### PUBLIC MEETINGS

A write-up of two public meetings held at Fairlie Creek warranted a report 84 inches in length in the *Timaru Herald* — columns in those days were  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches wide, and not  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches as today, and the print smaller. The report said that for some time there had been a strong feeling growing up among rate-payers in the Mount Cook Road District on the subject of the Board's engineer, Mr F. W. Marchant, being disallowed by the new Board, elected the

previous June, the privilege of private practice, which he had previously enjoyed. The approach of an election of a county council had raised that feeling to a high pitch.

A meeting in the Fairlie Creek schoolroom was called by Messrs J. I. Milne and R. Rutherford, and other candidates were invited to attend. It appears that Mr Rutherford was largely responsible for stopping the engineer from doing private work. The meeting is said to have been a lively one and a good deal of dirty linen of various patterns was dragged into, if not washed, in public view. Several charges were made against Mr Marchant, who was not present, and the upshot was that Mr E. Richardson called a meeting for the following Thursday, challenging Messrs Rutherford and Milne to attend and prove the statement they had made, of course inviting Mr Marchant to be present.

#### SECOND PUBLIC MEETING

Fully a hundred people attended the second meeting, a number going up from Albury. Mr Richardson spoke at length. He refuted the allegation that he had been going round the district button-holing ratepayers, and also that there had been complaints about Mr Marchant's work. Several charges of neglect had been made at the previous meeting, but these had now dwindled down to one, which was also said to be disproved.

Mr Rutherford then took the floor, but there was mainly cross talk, including a dispute about a "bush section" concerning which the reporter said he could not gather what it was all about. Mr Marchant spoke at length, calling upon several people to substantiate his defence against the charges made by Mr Rutherford. Mr Marchant later poured oil on the troubled waters by saying that the Board had not done wrong in stopping private work, but there had been misrepresentation about it, and he wished to have matters explained. He had now had enough of it, and suggested that the most sensible thing to do was to take Mr Wilson's question, which he had asked some time before. Mr Wilson had asked whether Mr Richardson would be in favour of moving the offices from Burkes Pass to Fairlie Creek. Mr Richardson gave reasons why they should be.

#### A WELCOME DIVERSION

Mr Wilson said he would take advantage of so many ratepayers being assembled to bring forward a few matters of importance to the district. These concerned the opening of the railway extension from Albury to Fairlie Creek without delay, the extension of the telegraph line to Fairlie Creek, and the transfer of the police station at Albury to the Creek. These were carried unanimously, and the meeting terminated with the usual vote of thanks to the chairman.

#### THE ELECTORS' VERDICT

On 17th November 1883 the electors made up their minds. For the Tekapo Riding, Messrs McGregor, Cowan and Duncan were elected unopposed. For the Fairlie Riding, Messrs M. J. Gray, J. S. Rutherford, E. Richardson Jun. and H. Struthers were elected, and Messrs J. I. Milne, R. Rutherford and S. Snushall rejected.

ELECTION ADVERTISEMENTS

"No holds barred" election advertisements which appeared  
in the *Timaru Herald* in November 1883:

**Free and Independent Electors  
of the Mackenzie  
ROLL UP**

SHOW Yourselves Men and Decent  
Descendants of Your Noble Sires,  
whose Heart's Blood was often shed in  
defence of Right and High Principle.

In this Very Free Country you are  
not now called upon to tap your Claret  
or that of anyone else in those Sacred  
Causes; but

ROLL UP ON THE 17TH,  
AND

VOTE AGAINST HOLE AND CORNER  
WORK,  
AND

POLL FOR STRAIGHT UP AND  
DOWN BRITISH FAIR PLAY,  
WHOEVER MAY FALL.

LET US HAVE NO MORE BLUNDER-  
ING, SCHEMING, OR PIG-  
HEADED OBSTINACY.

VOTE FOR MEN WHOSE SOLE  
DESIRE IS TO DO THEIR DUTY  
TO THE DISTRICT  
AND

WHO HAVE NO LITTLE WIRES TO  
PULL AND DUMMIES TO DANCE.

**Vote for Struthers**

**Vote for Gray**

**Vote for Richardson**

**Vote for J. S. Rutherford**

And the Mackenzie County Council  
may yet be a Credit to the District.

No Shinanikin, now; No Plumping.  
Fair and Square Polling this time. No  
sneaking of Votes by Shouting,—to the  
shame both of Shouter and Shoutee.  
"A Straight Man needeth not to enlist  
the agency of Beer in a Good and  
Public Cause; so let every Cask stand  
on its own bottom." Thus saith Poor  
Richard.

THEN ROLL UP, FREE AND INDE-  
PENDENT ELECTORS OF THE  
MACKENZIE, ROLL UP. 11-13 7330

**WAKE UP! WAKE UP!**

**ELECTORS OF FAIRLIE RIDING!!!**  
Show yourselves Men and Stick to your  
Beer as your Fathers did before you.

NO BLUE RIBBON.

Stick to your British Beer.

**WE ARE COMING!  
WE ARE COMING!**

Your way with subscription list. No  
more taxing to keep friends. Do it  
by subscription like Men.

**BE CAREFUL! BE CAREFUL!**

Of the free and independent advertise-  
ment. That man slept in the same  
tent with a "Yankee" and fancied  
himself one next morning. "Don't  
wonder." Take care.

**ROLL UP ON THE 17TH**

Vote against Ratepayers Paying for  
Squatters Surveying.

Vote for Men who have proved them-  
selves good and true.

**Vote for Milne**

**Vote for R. Rutherford**

**Vote for Snushall**

No Friends to keep. No half "Yank"  
about us. Roll up and vote for three  
good Men and True. 11-16 7370

## THE FIRST COUNCIL MEETING

Omnium enim rerum principia parva sunt.  
*For the beginnings of all things are small.*  
— Cicero

The first meeting of the Mackenzie County Council, held on 3rd December 1883, was much as one would expect it to be. It was attended by all seven councillors, John McGregor, M. J. Gray, J. S. Rutherford, E. Richardson, H. Struthers, J. Duncan and A. Cowan. Mr McGregor was elected chairman. A salary of £325 per annum was offered to Mr Marchant for his services as clerk, engineer and treasurer, to be allowed to undertake private work subject to the approval of the council, also an allowance of three tons of coals for office use per annum, and further that he enter into a fidelity bond in the sum of £100, and that an agreement be drawn up embodying these conditions.

There was a letter from the Surveyor General stating that the Government did not contemplate expending more than £400 in the construction of the Glentanner to Mount Cook track, but that under the circumstances of this case the Government was willing to grant a further amount of £2 for every £1 expended by the local body to complete the track as far as Birch Hill. It was decided to spend £150 in order to obtain the Government subsidy "to open the track for wheeled traffic".

An offer by Thomas Caskey, who was in charge of the pound at Fairlie Creek, to supply dog collars in such quantities as may be required, delivered free at Burkes Pass for the sum of 9d each, was accepted. A dog tax was fixed at 10/- a head per annum, but that every bona fide shepherd or person using dogs in the management of stock be allowed two dogs free of tax; also that persons engaged in the destruction of rabbits must apply to the rabbit inspector for a certificate that their dogs are exclusively so employed; they will then be exempt from the payment of any tax; also that the collectorship be offered to Mr T. Caskey of Fairlie Creek, and Mr J. Burgess of Burkes Pass, at a remuneration of 10%.

The engineer was asked to report on the best method of preventing flood-water from overflowing the township sections of Fairlie Creek, and he was empowered to obtain a sufficient quantity of stone blocks for the extension groins in the Opihi River at Crane's Corner to prevent the encroachment of the river on the road. It was decided that the Fairlie Creek cemetery be publicly notified as being open for public interment, and that the sextonship thereof be offered to Mr Robert Ridole, his remuneration being the moneys received from the sexton's fees in accordance with the scale fixed by the Mount Cook Road Board district cemetery regulations.

Other items were dealt with, including machinery resolutions required to abolish the Road Board, and the appointment of Mr G. F. Clulee to consult with the Geraldine County Council and report on the adjustment of accounts between the two bodies. In January, Mr Clulee reported that the Mackenzie County Council was indebted to the Geraldine County Council to the extent of £375/18/-, being the district's share of the debit balance of the whole county as at 30th September 1883. Mr Clulee was thanked for his exhaustive report, and the sum was paid immediately.

## THE MOUNT COOK ROAD

One of the major preoccupations of the new council was the development of, and keeping in repair, the Mount Cook road. Local interested parties wanted the road from Tekapo to Mount Cook completed as soon as practicable, while the Government was slow in making the grants necessary for the extension. This development must be considered within the setting that in the year 1884, the year the railway reached Fairlie, a private company built the Hermitage and operated a coaching service between the Hermitage and Fairlie. It is interesting to note that Capt. Francis Hayter was chairman of the company, and the first coach to reach the Hermitage was a six-in-hand driven by Mr John Rutherford.

We have already noted that at its first meeting the council decided to spend up to £150 to open the track for wheeled traffic. In 1885, a letter was received stating that the Government would contribute £1 for every £1 provided by the Mackenzie County up to the sum of £250 for the extension of the Mount Cook track on the western side of the Tasman River. The council looked upon this work as a colonial work and asked the member for Gladstone, Mr J. H. Sutter, to endeavour to get a grant for its construction. In 1886, the Surveyor General agreed to entrust the council with the sum of £1200 for improvement of the road to Mount Cook.

Apparently this caused a bit of concern. The council received a letter from Messrs R. Rutherford and E. Richardson, stating that, representing the feeling of a large part of the district, they urged the council to spend the grant of £1200 on a footbridge over the Tasman above Mr Burnett's station. The money would be of more use expended this way, but would go a short way in making a road, which would not be likely to stand. The proposed bridge would shorten the journey, besides having a good road already made. The council decided that it was not prepared to experiment with such engineering works at present.

## THE RABBIT MENACE

*How long, how long, in infinite pursuit  
Of This and That endeavour and dispute.*

— Omar Khayyam

Conflicting views on how to deal with the rabbit menace are reflected in correspondence between the Mackenzie County Council and the Government. Rabbits were first brought into the country as early as 1838, but it was not until the late sixties that they became well established in Otago and Southland. Then they invaded north, and became numerous in South Canterbury in the early eighties, but no serious steps were taken to combat the threat. Rabbit Nuisance legislation had come into operation in 1876, providing for the destruction of all rabbits on private and Crown lands, and inspectors were appointed to see that this was done. The stance adopted by the Mackenzie County Council from June 1886, until the suggestion of forming a Rabbit Board in 1893, gives a vivid idea of how a county viewed the actions of general government, and the impasse that comes about from the clash of two opposite points of view.

#### SELF-SUFFICIENCY

A letter was received from the Tuapeka County Council relating to the Rabbit Act. The contents are not known, but the council viewed with alarm a proposed attempt by the Amuri sheep farmers to impose a tax on all sheep in the province for protecting a few from the inroads of rabbits, while the settlers in South Canterbury had gone to considerable expense in successfully coping with the pest. The parliamentary members for South Canterbury were urged to use their influence to frustrate any attempt at such unjust legislation. Both Capt. Sutter and Mr W. Rolleston replied that they would give the matter every consideration, but neither promised support or otherwise.

#### HEADWATERS OF OHAU

In the meantime the Vincent County Council wrote seeking support for certain resolutions being given effect to by legislation. In response, the council did not see the advisability of the Government granting a bonus for the exportation of rabbit skins, but considering the threatened invasion of rabbits from Otago round the headwaters of the Ohau it was of the opinion that the rabbit inspector should keep a man permanently in that neighbourhood, to report on the condition of the pest and destroy rabbits on Crown land. Captain Sutter strongly urged upon the Colonial Secretary the necessity for vigorous measures, recommending that a rabbit inspector be stationed in the district as the council desired.

#### CONFLICTING EVIDENCE

In September 1886, Captain Hayter read out correspondence he had received from Mr C. G. Tripp, of Orari Gorge, on the rabbit question. A long discussion followed which ended with the council resolving, "That in view of the very grave question involved by the conflicting statements made by witnesses examined before the joint committee of both houses, as to the existing state of the rabbits in the Ohau Gorge on the one hand, and the totally different version furnished by Superintending Inspector Bayly and Inspector Rees of Timaru, on the other hand, as evidenced by Mr Tripp's letters now under consideration: That the Government be requested to send an expert totally unconnected with the Rabbit Department to the locality mentioned, with as little delay as possible, with instructions to give a full report on the actual state of affairs, so that if necessary immediate action may be taken in the matter. And further, that this council will undertake to defray the expense of such mission, should the danger prove no more serious than as stated by the Superintending Inspector."

#### DEPUTATION URGING ACTION

A deputation was then received of Messrs J. Ritchie and James Wilson, a general discussion then taking place in which Mr F. F. C. Huddleston, the ranger for the Mount Cook area, took part. It was pointed out that the advance of rabbits was invariably heralded by the presence of does from twenty to thirty miles in advance of the main body. The council felt that the onus of dealing with the pest should not be borne by a few individuals whilst

waging war for the general good. A copy of Mr Tripp's letter and enclosures were sent to the Colonial Secretary, together with a copy of the resolution and an account of the statement made by the deputation.

#### INSPECTORS' NEGATIVE REPORT

There is some confusion as to exactly what happened next. In November the Colonial Secretary advised that the Ohau Gorge district was being examined by three inspectors, but later in the month he sent reports of four inspectors. Apparently these reports virtually ignored the existence of any real danger from the rabbit pest in the vicinity of Ohau Gorge. The council recorded its unaltered opinion, that unless exceptional measures were adopted by the Government to meet the threatened danger the gravest results must be looked for. The Colonial Secretary was advised accordingly.

#### MR P. B. BOULTON'S REPORT

In April 1887, the Colonial Secretary supplied a copy of an inspection report of Chief Inspector Boulton on the Ohau district, and also Agent Thompson's report respecting the same neighbourhood. The council recorded its unqualified satisfaction that the report confirmed its opinions, and trusted that the Government would adopt vigorous measures to check the pest as suggested in the report without delay. The Colonial Secretary was advised to that effect.

#### RABBIT NUISANCE AMENDMENT ACT

In May, the Colonial Secretary forwarded a copy of the Rabbit Nuisance Amendment Act, suggesting that the council form a Rabbit District. The council decided that in view of the tenure of the leases, and the ignorance that existed in the minds of the lessees as to what action may be taken on the part of the Government with regard to renewals, even if a Rabbit Board was formed, it would be utterly hopeless to expect settlers to allow themselves to be burdened with the heavy expenses that would be incurred in dealing effectively with the matter. There would also be delay in getting the Rabbit Board into effective working order. The council also pointed out that it was because of the Rabbit Department's ignoring the seriousness of the danger until now that the pest had assumed such alarming proportions.

#### RABBIT-PROOF FENCING

It was now clear that unless something was done, rabbits would cross the Waitaki River and invade the Mackenzie County. The Government built a wire netting fence from the Waitaki River opposite Kurow, up the Haka-taramea Valley, across the Kirkliston Range, following the Stoney River, and through Grays Hills to the Tekapo River. It then went cross-country to Lake Pukaki, and twenty miles up the eastern side of Tasman Valley, terminating at Rock Etam, about four miles beyond Mount Cook homestead.

#### RABBIT BOARD SUGGESTED

In July 1893, a suggestion from the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Co. to form a local board to deal with the rabbit pest was backed by a deputation consisting of Messrs T. R. Seddon of Ashwick and E. Richardson of Albury, and a memorandum signed by a large number of South Canterbury stock owners in favour of a Rabbit Board being formed. It was decided that the

Waimate and Geraldine county councils be communicated with to ascertain their views on the subject. The Geraldine council stated that when it was in possession of more information on the subject it would consider the matter.

That is all that happened at the time. From then on rabbits flourished, and although it was hard work rabbiters made a good living, while the county council had the perennial problem of dealing with requests and complaints. Poison, trapping, shooting, dogging, and ferreting with net were methods of extermination used, but rabbit boards did not appear in the Mackenzie until the 1930's and 1940's.

### AFFORESTATION AT ASHWICK FLAT

*I think that I shall never see  
A poem lovely as a tree.*

— Joyce Kilmer (1886-1918)

Under the Road Board an area had been set aside at Ashwick Flat as a reserve. The new council decided to apply to the Minister of Lands that the reserve be vested in the county, and that twenty acres of it be enclosed and planted with forest trees; that the land be ploughed up at once for the plantation, and that Mr M. Fitzgerald's tender of £10 per 1000 be accepted for planting. The Crown Lands Office then advised that Ashwick reserve, containing ninety-six acres, had been vested in the county for plantation purposes. Then in October 1884 it was decided that an extra 3000 trees for which holes had been dug should be planted under the same terms which Mr Fitzgerald contracted for planting the first twenty acres. In September 1885 another ten acres was planted.

In May 1887 the council started naming the trees to be planted. It was decided to plant twelve acres, and that Mr Fitzgerald be informed that they were to be planted in proportion, one-third larch, one-third Douglas pine and one-third Menziesii. Mr Fitzgerald apparently planted further trees in 1888, and then in September 1890 he wrote, stating that when going over the Ashwick Flat plantation renewing blanks he had pulled up some 1000 larch trees, which had been cut down by hares, and had replaced them with good healthy trees, and asked to be allowed for the trees planted. Mr Fitzgerald was allowed £10 without prejudice for the work done. About that time Mr Fitzgerald said he was prepared to plant further trees on the same conditions as previously. He said the remainder of the ground "on Melville Flat" was very well suited for the growth of larch, and he would be prepared to plant the ground in the proportion of half or three-quarters larch, the remainder *pinus lauricis*, *pinus insignis*, *pinus ponderosa*, *pinus escelsia*, *abies*, Menziesii, oak, birch, and ash, with poplar and willow stakes in wet ground.

It was decided to plant the remaining portion of Ashwick Flat, about twelve acres, with three-quarters larch, and about equal proportion of the other sorts mentioned, with the exception of ash, to be distributed amongst the larch.

### FAIRLIE CREEK TOWNSHIP

Over the years prior to the close of the century, Fairlie Creek township so developed that it rivalled Burkes Pass as the natural centre for the Mackenzie County. Meanwhile it was always in the news, with residents complaining that

the town was subject to flooding whenever there was a storm, and there were constant requests for new roading and roading repairs. As an example: in March 1884 the council received a petition from a Mr Close and fourteen others, asking the council to lengthen the concrete culvert at Fairlie Creek and to form up a piece of road in the township. It was decided to lengthen the culvert, but the road formation was stood over meantime. In 1886 it was reported that certain work had been carried out, providing for removal of stormwater from the main street and the necessary formation in connection therewith.

In June 1889, the newly appointed clerk-engineer, Mr R. L. Banks, was instructed to report on the means of conveying a portion of the water in Silverstream Creek to Fairlie Creek, to take levels and measure the distance, and give an approximate cost of a race to a point a quarter of a mile north-west of Fairlie Creek, at least twenty feet higher than the level of the township at Egan's corner. In 1891, the *Timaru Herald* published an article headed "Irrigation at Fairlie Creek" which gave a vivid description of the township at that time:

"One noticeable improvement in the pretty and prosperous township of Fairlie Creek, which many visitors from Timaru and district on Easter Monday viewed with pleasure, was the stream of water which runs through the town, and irrigates the land in the immediate neighbourhood. To the Mackenzie County Council is due the credit of bringing in the water, the plans for the scheme having been drawn up by their clerk, Mr R. L. Banks, and the work personally supervised by him. The dam at Irishman Creek is constructed of timber which is kept in position by wrought iron circular piles three inches in diameter, and is situated about  $3\frac{3}{4}$  miles from Fairlie Creek.

"The race is all open work five miles in length, and was, with the exception of rounding one spur of the downs, good straight ahead work. The water race area takes in about 25 different properties, and to show the value the irrigation has on property, one instance may be cited. A five acre section which had been unfenced for years, was, on water being brought down, then let, and is bringing in the owner a very good return. The whole work was done by the council's men at a cost of £110, the work being remarkably good for such a low figure. There is a never failing supply of water to the headworks, and the value of the water for stock, and for such domestic uses as washing etc., is very high and greatly appreciated. As the council see their way, they will no doubt extend and enlarge the system of irrigation, and it is very gratifying to learn that property holders are prepared to cordially and liberally if necessary, back them up in their undertakings."

#### A BUREAUCRATIC MUDDLE

The sum involved was only £70, yet the *Timaru Herald* thought the matter serious enough to write a leading article on the principle involved. It started in November 1888, when the Surveyor General asked for details of how £430 voted by Parliament for the Mount Cook Road was to be spent. The council replied that it proposed to make a new piece of road, about one and a half miles, to clear the Tasman River where it encroached on the old bullock track near Glentanner Station, and the balance to effect improvements to existing formation.

Then there was a letter from Mr A. E. G. Rhodes, member for Gladstone, stating that he understood that the Minister of Lands would consent to the making of a new piece of road to avoid the Tasman River, and that the council should submit further proposals to the Government with regard to the spending of the balance. The Chief Surveyor, Mr John H. Baker, said he could not give authority for the expenditure of the grant for Mount Cook Road, unless detailed specifications of the work were submitted, and suggesting that he should send a surveyor to lay out the road. Mr Baker was informed that on receipt of the amount granted, the council would undertake the expenditure, and supply the greater portion of the plant necessary for the work, provided that the management was placed entirely in the council's hands, and further, should the money not be available without any further delay, the council deeply regretted to say that it could not undertake the work, as the plant was urgently required in other parts of the county. Another reason the council came to this conclusion was that considerable expense on many roads in the district had been caused through bad lines of road having been chosen by the Survey Department, the more recent being the road on the opposite side of the Tasman River bed, running through Braemar property, then in course of construction.

Mr Baker then informed the council that the Surveyor General had instructed him to say that the estimated cost of the cutting round the bend of the Tasman River, to allow the Mount Cook coaches to pass, would be placed at the council's disposal to be expended on the line of road selected by the Survey Office, progress payment to be made as the work proceeds. The council considered the line it had made would cost about £350, but the line laid off by the Survey Office would be more expensive. The council wanted to know what position it would be in if the road cost more than the surveyor estimated. In January the council was authorised to go ahead with the work.

Then, in June 1889, the trouble started when Mr Baker intimated that the Government had authorised the expenditure of only £430 on the Mount Cook Road, while the council had spent £500. He stated that in his letter of instruction dated 27th February he had inadvertently mentioned the amount of £500, although the Government had authorised only £430. The clerk stated that he had forwarded to the Minister of Lands an application for £430, and another £70, and had enclosed a copy of Mr Baker's instructions.

This led to a scathing leading article in the *Timaru Herald* detailing the history of the transaction, and also stating that the member for the district, Mr Rhodes, had said that the Government were empowered to expend an additional £170 on the work, and that the council had acted in good faith. "They should have regarded the work as of colonial importance, and placed liberal sums on the estimates for making it a really first-class highway. The little that they have done has had to be dragged out of them almost by main force, and now we find them refusing to pay a paltry sum of £70, for which it is quite clear that they are at all events morally responsible," concluded the *Herald*.

#### THE OHAU BRIDGE

In October 1885, a petition was received from Mr F. F. C. Huddleston and twenty-three other ratepayers, requesting the council to support an application to the Public Works Department for a grant to build a bridge over the Ohau River. It was agreed that the council would willingly support an application



FAIRLIE, JULY, 1903



FAIRLIE MAIN STREET, 1893



PUKAKI FERRY



TEKAPO BRIDGE, BUILT IN 1880

to the Government. Then, in March 1888, the Waitaki County Council wanted to know if the Mackenzie council intended taking any action in having the bridge built, and suggesting that in the event of the council agreeing to co-operate, that a meeting of the council engineers might be arranged to consider site plans etc., and also stating that an effort might be made to obtain from the Government a grant of more than £1 for £1.

The Mackenzie County Council did not show much enthusiasm. It was proposed by Mr Gillingham and seconded by Mr Saunders that, in considering the danger of rabbits crossing the bridge, this council is of the opinion that the bridge is not necessary, and further that the work is more of a colonial than a local undertaking. The following January, the Waitaki council advised that the Government had agreed to give £800 for a bridge over the Ohau River, and asked if the Mackenzie council would join the Waitaki in finding the balance of the cost which would probably be about £200. Messrs D. Sutherland and J. S. Rutherford appeared before the council to support the proposition, the latter giving details of the correspondence he had held with the Government on the matter. The probable cost in excess of £800 would not, he thought, be more than £300 at the very most, including approaches. It was decided to join the Waitaki council in the erection of the bridge, and to subsidise the work to the extent of £200.

In May 1889, the Waitaki council intimated that the plans of the bridge had been forwarded to the Government for approval, and that tenders would be called upon receipt of the certified plans. Later the Waitaki council accepted a tender from R. S. Sparrow for £1033/7/- which did not include the road formation and rock cuttings, for which other tenders would have to be called. In September the Mackenzie council received a letter from Markhan and Shortell, contractors for the approaches, asking if the council intended forming the new road laid off from Ohau bridge site to Pukaki ferry, and stating that, if so, they would be in a position to do the work very cheaply owing to their having the necessary plant on the ground. They were informed that the council did not intend doing anything to the road at present.

In July 1890, the Waitaki County Council wrote, announcing the satisfactory completion of the Ohau bridge and requesting payment of the council's promised contribution of £200. This amount was passed for payment.

#### MEDICAL SERVICE FOR FAIRLIE CREEK

What must have appeared at the time to be long and tedious negotiations took place in an attempt to persuade a medical man to reside in Fairlie Creek. In March 1884 a deputation from the Gladstone Oddfellows Lodge at Fairlie Creek, consisting of Messrs Pye and Gall, explained a scheme whereby the services of a medical man may be secured if the council would assist in granting a subsidy. A committee was appointed to draw up a report. A proposed scheme was sent to the Auditor General for approval, to be followed by a circular to every ratepayer, setting out the scheme and asking for opinion for or against — with the proviso that no reply was taken to be an affirmative vote.

In June it was decided that a bond be drawn up between the trustees of the lodge, and the council, by which the trustees would be bound to contribute the sum of £125 per annum for three years, being half of the subsidy to the proposed "district doctor's fund". Doctor's fees were arranged: consultations

not exceeding 10/-, no charge to be made for travelling within a radius of one mile from the Fairlie Creek pound; beyond that distance up to fifteen miles, 4/- per mile; and for every mile beyond fifteen miles, 3/- per mile. Also in June objections to the doctor's scheme were received from Messrs D. McLean, G. Morris, J. L. Morris, Godby and Clulee, Andrew Burnett, G. Cooke, E. Dark and Mrs Freme, representing property to the value of £60,519, or about one-thirteenth of the whole county value.

The following month the lodge came back with an alternative offer of £2 per head per annum for each financial member, and when the doctor was engaged the lodge would appoint him as their medical officer. This offer was accepted by the council, and the clerk directed to draw up conditions of appointment, and advertise the position in Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin.

By March 1885 all negotiations for the medical practice had fallen through, and there was no immediate prospect of an appointment being made. In October the council received another deputation on the subject, to which it replied that it would make the same offer as the previous year. Things seemed to have dragged on without any tangible result when, in March 1886, Captain Sutter forwarded an application from Dr Frank Ogston of Aberdeen, and requesting that the appointment be made by the council, a telegram to be sent at once to Aberdeen. The clerk was instructed to act accordingly. The next step makes curious reading. In May a letter was received from Captain Sutter stating that Dr Ogston had accepted an appointment with the Otago University, but that Professor Ogston of Aberdeen University had engaged Dr Henry Angus for the post and that he would be in New Zealand in a few months. Then Dr Frank Ogston forwarded the cost of the telegram to Scotland, and expressed regret that his health prevented him from accepting the council's appointment.

In September, Dr Henry Angus advised the council that he had begun work at Fairlie Creek on 16th August, and forwarded details in connection with the working of a cottage hospital, and requesting the council to consider having a hospital at Fairlie Creek. The council decided to defer the matter. On 1st November Dr Angus's resignation as medical officer was received. In January he requested the council to pay him two months salary for the time he lived at Fairlie Creek. The council declined to entertain the claim, and intimated to Dr Angus that it expressed extreme surprise at his audacity of making such a request.

In August 1892, Dr Morris of Pleasant Point wrote, stating on what terms he would be willing to attend professionally at Fairlie one day a week. He was informed that residents were taking steps to secure the services of a resident doctor. The Gladstone Oddfellows Lodge followed this up by resolving that should the council be successful in procuring a resident medical man, to appoint him as lodge doctor and to pay him at the rate of 30/- per member per year. Amounts guaranteed by settlers toward a subsidy came to nearly £170. The council decided to supplement this guarantee by £30, bringing the total up to £200. In October the chairman reported having interviewed Dr Douglas D. Dryden of Dunedin, who expressed his willingness to act as honorary medical officer for the Mackenzie County Local Board of Health. Dr Dryden was appointed accordingly.

Dr Dryden's appointment coincided with a measles epidemic. He certified that he had attended ninety-eight cases of measles in the county. Hardly a house in the district had escaped being visited. In January 1893, he drew attention to the cases of measles he had reported under the Health Act, stating that he believed he was entitled to a fee of 2/6 on each case. A legal opinion did not confirm this view unless a certain procedure had been followed, but the council considered that Dr Dryden had been unaware of the provisions of the Act, thus failing to report the cases at the proper time. He was voted the sum of £2/2/- without prejudice.

#### FAIRLIE CREEK LIBRARY

The origins of the provision of a public library for Fairlie go back to December 1885, when the council received Mr J. E. Goodwin as a deputation from the Fairlie Creek Library Committee, requesting assistance from the council towards the erection of a library and reading room at Fairlie Creek. Mr M. J. Gray proposed and Mr J. I. Milne seconded that the council put up a small building on the pound reserve, the total cost not to exceed £100, and the library committee pay bank interest on the outlay.

The following April there is a minute that Mr F. R. Gillingham wished to know what rent would be charged for the library building. It was decided to charge 7% on the outlay, payable half-yearly in advance.

The next serious development was in April 1888, when Mr F. A. H. McLean stated that, at a public meeting held on 31st March in connection with the public library, it was resolved in consequence of insufficient support from the public to ask the council to take charge of the books and furniture till such time as there seemed some hope of its being carried on successfully, and that if the council would consent he would get a list of the books made out before next meeting, and would hand the key of the library over at the same time. The council resolved to do as Mr McLean requested. The May minutes merely state that a letter had been received from Mr Allan McLean, forwarding a list of books in Fairlie Creek Library.

Another move was made in April 1889 to start the library again. Mr McLean intimated that he had very good grounds for believing that the Fairlie Creek Library could again be carried on with success, and asked if the council could not see its way to making a reduction in the rent so as to enable the promoters to see their way to keep the expenses within a small limit. It was decided that if the new library committee would forward a proposal the council would consider it.

In May 1889, Mr M. McLeod, chairman of the library committee, stated that the library was again opened, and requested the council to favourably consider the question of letting the building at a nominal rental, it being the case that the council could make use of the building for several purposes, free of cost. A rental was fixed at £5 per annum. A lease was drawn up inserting a clause that the building was not to be sublet unless the insurance be paid by the lessee, also that the council had the right to use the building for meetings and public purposes when required.

In August 1890, Mr Hugh Fraser, secretary to the Fairlie Creek Library Committee, wrote requesting a reduction in the rent of the building, and pointing out that the committee found they were unable to carry on the library

successfully unless the expenses were reduced. It was decided to reduce the rent to £2/10/- per annum, the amount required for repairs and insurance.

In October, the Magistrate's Court in Timaru was advised that the library building could be obtained rent free for three years to enable sittings of the Court in Fairlie Creek.

The following year it was decided to transfer council meetings from Burkes Pass to Fairlie Creek, the first such meeting being held in the library building on 25th November 1891, although the odd meeting had been held there on previous occasions.

#### WHERE ANGELS FEAR TO TREAD !

In June 1887, a letter was received from the secretary of the New Zealand Railways Reform League, forwarding a copy of a petition to Parliament, praying that Mr Samuel Vaile's system be accorded a trial, if not on the whole of the railways, then on one section.

Apparently Samuel Vaile advocated charging both fares and freights, not by the mile but by "stages" of varying lengths according to density of population. The idea was to give an advantage to sparsely populated districts, tending to remove the disadvantage of distance, and to spread the population more evenly. He also advocated substantial reduction of charges to encourage settlement and increase railway turnover.

His ideas were completely rubbished in a lengthy parliamentary report, compiled by the general manager of New Zealand Railways, Mr J. P. Maxwell. The report was most vitriolic, and not only ridiculed Mr Vaile's submissions but accused him of contradictions, inconsistencies, and called his proposals crude and incomplete. He accused Mr Vaile of advocating differential bases, and later violently condemning differential rating and scurrilously attacking those who did not agree with his proposals. Naturally, Mr Maxwell quotes facts and figures in rebuttal of claims made by Mr Vaile, but, on the whole, one is entitled to think that Mr Maxwell was not a disinterested party.

Mr Vaile's ideas must have had some local appeal, as when the Reform League's circular was read, Mr J. I. Milne moved, and Captain F. Hayter seconded, that the petition be signed by the chairman, and that the secretary of the Reform League be informed that the council supported its proposals. Mr A. E. G. Rhodes, member for Gladstone, advised the council that he would present their petition to Parliament.

#### PUBLIC WORKS: 1884 TO 1893

From about 1874 to 1880, the erstwhile Mount Cook Road Board seemed to have had plenty of money to spend on public works, and the formidable list of contracts let during that period gives the impression of a really live board pressing on with the development of road works in particular. During the last three years of its tenure of office, these works fell off drastically. When the council took over in 1883, a different picture seemed to emerge.

It must be remembered that there were probably several surfacemen employed on full-time repairs and maintenance. The work done by these men would not be reflected in council minutes, except that the clerk-engineer's report of work done during the previous month would be received, and possibly a resolution or two passed directing that some work be done. Scores of applications were received for roads to be put in order, and a stock resolution

seemed to be that these would be attended to, or attended to whenever surface-men were in the locality, or before they left a certain job. Occasionally there would be a directive that something be done immediately. Complaints were usually dealt with positively, or explained away to the satisfaction of the council and, presumably, the complainant. In other cases there would be a blunt refusal to do anything at all.

The following list is only a sample, but gives some idea of the type of business the council had to handle:

1884

Mr E. Dark complained about the bad state of the Pukaki-Glentanner road, and the manner in which the Glentanner to Mount Cook track had been laid out. The council regretted that these works did not meet with Mr Dark's approval, but they had been carried out in the manner authorised and they could not make any alteration.

Mr L. A. McPherson asked that repairs be effected on the Hakataramea Pass road, as he was about to remove the Whaleback Station buildings along it. The council replied that it could not grant the application, as the road had been made for light traffic, and was but seldom used.

Mr McCaw pointed out that some creeks on the Three Springs estate were encroaching on the roads, and suggested some protective works should be constructed to prevent further damage. It was decided to do the necessary protective works.

1885

The Public Works Department granted £176 for the construction of the Main Road between Albury and Rocky Gully.

The Opihi footbridge was made suitable for sheep traffic at a cost of £100/3/-, the Mount Peel Road Board paying half the cost.

1886

Mr Stronach of Ben Ohau Station wrote stating that he would be willing to pay half cost of fencing reserve 183, on condition that the cost should not exceed £40 a mile. The clerk was instructed to reply that the fencing could not be done for the money, and to give Mr Stronach the usual notice under the Fencing Act to proceed with the work.

1887

It was decided to call tenders for forming cuttings from Rocky Gully to the top of the Downs, southerly, and from Rocky Gully to connect with Mr Askin's road, the chairman to accept a price not exceeding £100.

1888

Mr E. Richardson Jun. requested to have about sixty chains of road opened on the Albury estate. The clerk stated that a deviation from the present survey line would be necessary. The council decided that it would do the work asked for, provided that a suitable line of road be surveyed in exchange, the expense of survey and exchange being borne by the Albury estate. Mr Richardson agreed to these terms.

1891

Mr I. M. Ritchie and fourteen other settlers applied for the formation of a road from Green Hill to the Pareora River bed through the village settlement block, a distance of about fifty chains. They pointed out that when the sections

in the settlement are taken up, the present track would be fenced off, and the only other road to the Cave would be four miles longer. It was decided to apply to the Government for a grant of £200.

Mr R. Irving drew attention to the bridge on the Mackenzie Road east of Coal Gully, which was unfit to carry threshing machines and engines. It was decided to redeck and strengthen the bridge before the next threshing season.

1892

A letter was received from six ratepayers of the Albury Riding asking that a footbridge might be put over the creek on the Mount Nessing Road near Albury township. It was decided to put a plank across the creek.

1893

James Durward, Black Forest, drew attention to the state of Haldon Road at Stoney Creek, the crossing on which had been scoured out the previous August. It was decided that whatever men could be spared be despatched at once to the Haldon Road, and from thence to the adjoining roads in the riding, and that in future two gangs of three men each be employed during the summer months, and during the remainder of the year to be at work in the Fairlie and Albury ridings.

In July a petition was presented, signed by twenty ratepayers residing between Silverstream and Burkes Pass, requesting the council to erect a stock bridge over the Opihi River at Bain's Crossing. A tender of £76/1/- by Mr S. Riddle was accepted to do the work.

#### SUBDIVISION OF FAIRLIE RIDING

The rapid growth and development of Fairlie Riding compared with Tekapo Riding meant that sooner or later the former would be subdivided. On 31st March 1890 the council decided that in order to have the ratepayers represented in a more satisfactory manner to divide Fairlie into two ridings. On 12th November this took effect, the new ridings being called Albury and Fairlie, each to have two members on the council.

#### FAIRLIE WATER DISTRICT

In July 1891, a petition was presented by the majority of the ratepayers in the Fairlie Riding, praying that the riding might be constituted a water district in terms of the Counties Act 1886. In August, the council constituted the Fairlie Water District as from 8th September 1891.

#### ASHWICK FLAT WATER DISTRICT

In September, a petition was presented by eight deferred payment settlers on Ashwick Flat, asking that the council should have a report made on constructing water races on Ashwick Flat. In August 1892, the Ashwick Flat Water District was constituted by cutting off certain deferred payment sections to be named Ashwick Flat subdivision of the Fairlie Water District, and to adopt the provisions of the Local Bodies Loan Act 1886.

In November 1892, a meeting of Ashwick Flat ratepayers agreed to apply for a loan of £1500 for the purpose of constructing water races in the Ashwick Flat district. The loan was approved, plans prepared, and tenders called. In October 1893, a tender from Mr D. Gregan for £616/6/8 was accepted. On Wednesday, 4th April 1894, the Ashwick Flat water races were opened.

The final cost was only £905, but as £1000 had already been received from Treasury the balance of £95 was retained for maintenance. Mrs Cotterell was appointed caretaker at £5 per annum, but in April 1896 she was appointed ranger at £15 per annum.

#### COUNCIL CONTRADICTS DICK SEDDON

In September 1891, when John Ballance was Premier, the council strongly protested against a statement made in the House of Representatives by the Hon. Mr R. J. Seddon in the debate on the Counties Bill, casting a serious slur on local bodies generally, in reference to the expenditure of deferred payment "thirds", and sent a copy of the council's balance sheet to the member for the district. A back-handed apology was forthcoming the following month, when Major Steward forwarded, for the council's information, a reply which he had received from Mr Seddon regarding the remarks he had made, which were objected to by the council. Mr Seddon said he had to express his pleasure that his remarks did not apply to the Mackenzie county, but said there were counties of which he had a personal knowledge in which his remarks did apply. Mr Seddon became Prime Minister in May 1893.

#### SPENDING OF THIRDS AND FOURTHS

Trouble brewed in August 1893 when the Under Secretary for the Department of Lands and Survey in Wellington wrote stating that a Mr H. Kidd, the lessee of sections 36056 and 36057, had complained to the Minister of Lands that he had applied to the council several times for road line to his sections, and had received the reply that the council could not accede to his request as the thirds accruing on these sections amounted to only £2/1/8 per annum. The minister found that the thirds from the sections amounted to £34/7/11, and desired to express his regret that the policy of the council seemed to be to debar settlement by not expending the funds in such a way as to assist settlers in occupying their land. He had, therefore, instructed the Commissioner of Crown Lands to withhold his assent in the meantime to any further payment to the county, until it was shown that the council would expend them in constructing roads leading to, or opening up Crown sections.

The letter gave rise to considerable discussion, and it was agreed that the chairman should reply, expressing his surprise that the Minister of Lands should have written as he had done without knowing the circumstances of the case, and should give full particulars on the subject and point out that R.S. 36057 had been sold by the Government without it having any road access whatever provided. The minister was also asked to give an instance where the council had not expended the thirds to the best advantage of the settlers.

This drew a leading article, thirty-six inches in length, in the *Timaru Herald*, castigating the Government for its action, and the Minister of Lands, John McKenzie. The *Herald* said, "The local bodies should remember that they are acting for the people at large, and if a Minister is allowed to dictate in manners in which the law gives him no authority, those who permit the interference, are parties to a robbery of popular rights. With all due regard to courtesy — a concession which he did not deserve, but which self-respect would have suggested to the more civilised intelligence of the County Council — Mr McKenzie should have been told to mind his own business and have been cautioned to keep his hands off the Council revenue."

The Seddon ministry had been in office only a few months, and this is how the *Herald* summed it up: "The present ministry are more autocratic, and more given to law-breaking in their efforts to enlarge their personal rule, than were any of their predecessors in the government of New Zealand; and chief among the autocrats — the most domineering, the most insolent, the most narrow-minded, and the most pig-headed of them all — is the Minister who has given the Mackenzie County Council a taste of his quality."

The next move was in October, when the Chief Surveyor of Christchurch asked the council to consult Mr O'Callaghan, the Crown Lands Ranger for South Canterbury, regarding the proposals for expending thirds and fourths from Crown sections in the county, as he, having a thorough knowledge of the settlers' road requirements, would be able to assist in making fair and satisfactory proposals that would probably be acceptable to both the Land Board and the settlers. Mr O'Callaghan was present when a quantity of correspondence was read regarding roads to Crown sections. It was agreed that the engineer and Mr O'Callaghan go into the matter and draw up proposals for the expenditure of all thirds and fourths in the county, to be laid before the council.

In April 1894, the Commissioner of Crown Lands stated that such proposals had been accepted, and that the Receiver of Land Revenue had been instructed to pay over the funds accruing for expenditure on the approved road works. The board also wished to be furnished with an approximate return showing mileage or chainage of roads to be formed or metalled for each section. The amount paid to the council was £749/9/4.

#### TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS

The Mackenzie County had to contribute to the cost of linking Fairlie Creek with Burkes Pass in 1891. Major W. J. Steward, member for Waimate, wrote to the council concerning correspondence between him and the Postmaster General with regard to the establishment of a telephone communication between Burkes Pass and Fairlie Creek. The Postmaster General stated that the cost of the line would be £600, and that the department would be willing to undertake its construction provided that one-third of the amount was subscribed by the council, distributed over five years in annual payments of £40. Major Steward thought this offer was a liberal one, and hoped to hear that the council, in view of the great advantage to the district, would see their way to guarantee the payment of the subsidy required. Caution ruled in the council, and the matter was deferred for consideration for one month.

In June Mr A. Cowan moved and Mr G. Alves seconded that the offer of the Government be accepted, and the amount charged to the Tekapo Riding. But it was not as easy as all that. Mr J. I. Milne moved, and Mr S. R. Dickson seconded, that the matter be deferred to the next meeting. The motion was carried on the casting vote of the chairman, Mr McGregor. It was decided to thank Mr Steward for the assistance he had rendered in the matter. The Burkes Pass office was opened on 16th November 1891.

#### COUNCIL MOVES TO FAIRLIE CREEK

The final decision to move the council offices from Burkes Pass to Fairlie Creek was preceded by much opposition and acrimonious debate. The first

positive move came when Mr F. R. Gillingham moved that the meetings of the council be held at Fairlie Creek for a period of twelve months from 5th January 1891. He said he thought the time had arrived for the business of the council to be transferred to a more central position, and also considered that it would be of great benefit to the ratepayers and members of the Fairlie and Albury ridings. A discussion ensued in which Mr J. I. Milne supported the proposal, but Captain Hayter opposed it. Mr A. Cowan moved and Mr G. Alves seconded, as an amendment, that sufficient reasons had not been given for the change, and therefore in the interests of the ratepayers it was not warranted. No one questioned the fact that this might be a direct negative. It was carried by four votes to three, and Mr Gillingham's motion lost. For the motion were Messrs Gillingham, Milne and Dickson; against, Messrs J. McGregor, Cowan, Alves and Hayter.

#### REMOVAL OF OFFICES

It was not long before the matter was raised again, but this time successfully. In the meantime Captain Hayter was off the council, and replaced by Mr Robert Rutherford. In October the matter was debated again, with the usual motion and amendment, but this time the amendment was lost, and the motion to move carried. The engineer was instructed to draw up plans for a suitable building to be erected at Fairlie Creek. Next month a petition was presented, signed by sixty-three ratepayers protesting against the shifting of the offices to Fairlie Creek and asking the council to reconsider its decision on the grounds that no adequate reasons had been advanced for the change being made, and that the expense appeared to the petitioners to be an unnecessary one. The petition was received. The engineer's plan and estimate of cost was tabled. It was decided to call applications for the sale or lease for a term of seven years of the county buildings at Burkes Pass. In March, Mr R. Guthrie offered £300 for the buildings, or he would be willing to pay 8/- a week rent.

#### BURKES PASS BUILDING

Mr Guthrie's offer was not accepted. Mr Thomas McDonald of Tekapo then made an offer of £400 for the building and section, but this offer also came to nothing. Tenders were then called for a seven-year lease of the buildings and reserve comprising four acres. On 14th November 1892, the council accepted Mr A. Cowan's tender of £26/10/-. In May 1901, Mrs David Gunn took over, and in September the following year Mr Malcolm McLeod. Then Mr R. Cowan had it at 6/- a week for a time, and in November 1904 Mr Donald Ross took over. Mr Ross eventually bought the property for £550 in 1920.

#### FIRST COUNCIL OFFICES AT FAIRLIE

In July 1892, the council bought a house property of Mr A. Morris for £400. Mr Morris then submitted a price for several articles of furniture etc. The chairman and clerk were authorised to buy what was required at Mr Morris's auction sale. This purchase produced a spate of about a dozen letters in the *Timaru Herald* both for and against the move, in which the house was alternatively described as an old rotten building and a tumble-down structure, and as the most respectable dwelling in Fairlie.

Meanwhile, the name Fairlie Creek was shortened to Fairlie on 1st June 1892. From the minutes it would appear that the last meeting of the council held in the Fairlie Library was on 14th November 1892, and the first meeting in the new council office on 23rd November. The council had met in the library since 25th November 1891.

#### KEA BEAKS AND BIRDS' EGGS

When the first settlers reached South Canterbury, they found great numbers of moths and butterflies, the caterpillars of some of which played havoc with crops and pastures. Birds were imported to deal with the problem, but they destroyed the grain crops they were supposed to protect. Sparrows became the greatest pest of these small exotic birds. In addition the native kea (*nestor notabilis*) was blamed for the destruction of sheep. Poisoned grain was sold by the county council, and rewards offered for the destruction of keas and sparrows.

In 1891, a letter was received from Mr A. Douglas, inspector of stock in Timaru, saying that he was authorised to give a subsidy of 6d a beak for keas, on production of a declaration that the beaks had been paid for and destroyed. The council voted the sum of £10 to purchase all kea beaks received by 1st January 1892. The clerk (Mr R. L. Banks) reported that 259 beaks had been received to that date, and the council bought them at 6d each.

The matter was so serious that a conference of county chairmen was held in Ashburton in August 1893 on the subject. As a result the clerk was directed to obtain samples and quotations of Cambridge's poisoned wheat with a view to procuring five bushels. Eggs and heads of small birds were to be bought at the same price as given by the Levels Road Board, understood to be about 3d or 4d a dozen. In 1894, further poisoned wheat was purchased for the use of ratepayers, and eggs of small birds were procured at 2d a dozen.

The destruction of keas and small birds was kept up right through until the 1940's. In 1933 the council had decided to discontinue the purchase of heads and eggs, and also the distribution of poison. "The birds do much more good than we give them credit for," said the then chairman, Mr George Murray. Keas were not mentioned.

This could not have been carried out in its entirety, as in 1936 it was decided that no more kea beaks or birds' eggs would be purchased, but later the buying of beaks was reinstated. In July 1942, poisoned grain was again made available, and advertised at 6d a pint, farmers to bring their own containers. Kea beaks were still being bought in 1946.

#### RUMBLES OF LABOUR SOLIDARITY

Many of the rights and privileges taken for granted today have evolved almost imperceptibly over the years from conflicting interests keeping watch over their own affairs. In January 1889, in all good faith, Mr R. Rutherford moved and Mr S. R. Dickson seconded that the council fix 7/- a day for all roadmen during the summer (six months) and 6/- a day in winter (six months), except the head ganger to be 9/- per day as at present, to take effect in three months time. It was also decided to fix the clerk's salary at £150 per year with usual allowances, and that it be offered to the present clerk before advertising for one, to take effect at the end of three months.

Mr Cochrane left in June, although there is nothing to suggest that the salary was the reason. In June a letter was received from Messrs Lott and Struthers, drivers for the council, requesting that their wages might be retained at the old rate of 7/- a day in winter and 8/- a day in summer, or if any reduction be made they should be allowed full time for wet weather. The council resolved that the wages remain as before, and that any amount deducted for the previous month be refunded.

At the same time the Labour Movement was developing in other parts of the colony, and in September of the following year a letter was received from the secretary of the Oamaru Farmers and Employers Club, enclosing copies of a circular concerning the Labour Movement, with a request that they be distributed to those likely to form a union similar to one in that district. The club considered that the aggressive attitude of farm labourers, shearers and others employed on stations in leaguing together for the purpose of increasing wages and shortening working hours, indicated the absolute necessity of employers to take some decided action in defence of their interests. Whether or not the motive was to let sleeping dogs lie, or that any such move to form a union could not be detected in the county, is not stated, but the council decided merely to receive the letter.

Meanwhile a letter had been received from the secretary of the Canterbury Trades and Labour Council, forwarding a resolution passed by that body, that public bodies be requested when accepting tenders for works to take into consideration whether the amount of the tender will allow the payment by the tenderer of a fair rate of wage to his workmen. This letter was also received.

#### JOHN McGREGOR, 1840 TO 1918

John McGregor was the first and third chairman of the Mackenzie County Council. He is described as a native of the back country of Banffshire, Scotland, where he was born in 1840. He landed at Lyttelton in January 1863, and was immediately engaged by Henry Ford on Reid's Station on the Waimakariri. Three months later the two started for the Grampians with a mob of 3000 Merino wethers. It took them two days to get the mob over the Rakaia, which was "running down" after a high flood. Working waist deep in the water and without horses, they had narrow escapes from being washed away, but they got their sheep over without loss. Mr McGregor worked at the Grampians for some years as a shepherd. Describing the work, he said, "We had to go round them every day. There were no fences in those days. I had to go over the top of the Grampians every morning, and reckoned if I was not away by four o'clock, I had slept in."

In 1873, he discovered a 5000-acre block of land in the forks of the Cass River which had not been claimed. He obtained a licence, occupied the land, and named it Glenmore. He is therefore credited with being the last man to take up Crown land in the Mackenzie country. In 1875, he incorporated Castle Hill, which he bought from Alfred Cox, into his holding, and retained the name Glenmore for both stations. Here he stayed until 1891 when financial circumstances forced him to give it up, and the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Co. took it over and ran it in conjunction with Balmoral. From 1891 to 1902 he lived on his freehold at Burkes Pass, and in that year he bought the grazing run Rona from Donald McMillan and worked it until 1911 when he retired to live in Fairlie.

John McGregor was a member of the Mount Cook Road Board for just on eight years, and its last chairman. In 1883 he organised a successful petition to have the road district formed into a county. Being chairman for ten of the first years of the young county's life, Mr McGregor laid the foundations of a virile and most successful local body. During the period 1883 to 1894, there were two chairmen, Mr McGregor from 1883 to 1891, James Imlay Milne from 1891 to 1893, and John McGregor again from 1893 to 1894.

Statutory requirements were that there should be a chairman elected annually in November. Mr McGregor was consistently elected until 1891 when he was out-voted by three votes to two in favour of Mr Milne. However, Mr Milne was defeated in the 1893 election, and on ballot between Mr McGregor and Mr Richardson, the former became chairman once more. In November 1894 he did not seek re-election as chairman, as since the office had been shifted from Burkes Pass he had not been able to give the attention to the business of the council that he had previously done. Mr Edward Richardson Jun. was elected in his place. Mr McGregor stayed on the council until 1896.

In addition to all this, Mr McGregor was secretary of the Tekapo Jockey Club for sixteen years, was a prime mover in forming the Burkes Pass Domain Board, was on the school and cemetery committees, its Caledonian Society, was appointed a Justice of the Peace in 1882, and from 1884 to 1915 had a seat on the Licensing Committee. It is also on record that the first trout liberated in Lake Alexandrina were brought from Christchurch by Mr McGregor. It is said that he died during the big snowstorm of 1st July 1918.

#### JAMES IMLAY MILNE

James Milne was the second chairman of the Mackenzie County Council from 1891 to 1893. He was born in Aberdeenshire, Scotland, in 1836, and arrived at Port Chalmers in 1863. After some experience at gold digging he commenced farming in Otago. With Messrs W. Evans and F. Le Cren he took up Strathallan Station, which he and his partners were interested in for sixteen years. He settled in Albury, and was a member of the Mount Cook Road Board before the county council was formed. In a stormy election campaign for the first council he was not elected, but in the following year, 1884, he started his nine-year career as a councillor until 1893. A motion of regret at his passing and sympathy to his relatives was passed in the January 1918 meeting of the council.

#### CAPTAIN FRANCIS HAYTER

Captain Francis Hayter was a member of the Mackenzie County Council from 1886 to 1891. He was not a member of the first council in 1883 as suggested elsewhere. During his term of office his main contribution was the part he took in investigating the rabbit pest problem. Captain Hayter bought Rollesby from Mr A. B. Smith in 1882. It is stated that he bought the station just in time to be caught by the lean years of the eighties, and the snowstorm of 1888 greatly depleted his flock. He had been a naval officer, and had served with Admiral Morsby's expedition which surveyed the northern coast of Queensland and New Guinea. A resultant illness of malaria compelled him to go to England in 1891 to undergo an operation from which he died. He left a widow and eight young children.

At the April 1891 meeting of the council Captain Hayter applied for seven months leave of absence to go to England. At the same time a petition was presented, signed by nearly all the ratepayers of Albury Riding, asking that leave of absence be refused on the grounds that the largest ratepaying riding in the county would be represented by only one member for six to eight months, which would be detrimental to its interests. The wishes of the ratepayers were acceded to.

An election was held to fill the vacancy, the candidates being Robert Rutherford and Alexander Searle Smith. The former received forty-four votes and the latter forty-two, Rutherford being elected. It must have been a sad moment when the council in July 1891 was informed of Captain Hayter's death in England, and passed a suitable resolution of regret, the clerk being instructed to convey to Mrs Hayter an expression of the council's sympathy and condolence in her sudden loss.

#### MACKENZIE COUNTY STATISTICS, 1891-1893

The census of 1891 revealed the following population figures for the Mackenzie County:

	Males	Females	Total
Tekapo	130	51	181
Fairlie	399	333	732
Albury	159	108	267
Totals	<u>688</u>	<u>492</u>	<u>1180</u>

#### LAND TAX VALUATIONS

The following were the valuations of the Mackenzie County subdivision of South Canterbury to the nearest thousands of pounds in 1892:

	Total Value	Improve- ments	Land Value
Tekapo Riding	213	18	195
Fairlie Riding	225	65	160
Albury Riding	<u>298</u>	<u>64</u>	<u>234</u>
	<u>£736</u>	<u>£146</u>	<u>£590</u>

#### THE NEW RIDINGS

When Fairlie Riding was divided into two ridings, Fairlie and Albury, in 1893, the following figures were completed:

	Rateable Value	Population	Rates Collected
Tekapo	£223,990	181	£453 12 4
Fairlie	£229,286	718	£453 8 6
Albury	<u>£298,999</u>	<u>267</u>	<u>£622 1 6</u>
Total	<u>£752,275</u>	<u>1166</u>	<u>£1529 2 4</u>

#### ROADING AND EXPENSES

In June 1891, the clerk supplied the Secretary to the Treasury with statistics showing 505 miles of road in the county, costing £112,400.

# 4

## The Turn of the Century

### A TOUR OF INSPECTION

Toitu he kainga, whatungarongaro he tangata.

*The land still remains when the people have disappeared.*

— Maori proverb

A lengthy report on a tour of inspection undertaken in September 1900 sets out clearly the responsibilities of the Mackenzie County Council at the turn of the century. The party consisted of Messrs J. S. Rutherford, W. F. Hamilton and A. Burnett, councillors, together with a representative of the *Morning Post*, and covered seven days in easy stages. On Monday, 10th September, Messrs Rutherford and Burnett drove from Albury to Mr W. F. Hamilton's Ashwick Station, where they stayed for the night, and, accompanied next morning by Mr Hamilton and the reporter, set out on the journey proper in a covered drag behind a spanking four-in-hand team from Mr Hamilton's stable. Mr Hamilton handled the ribbons most efficiently. The day was beautifully fine, and with good roads over which to travel from Ashwick Station to Tekapo the drive was a most enjoyable one.

The first plantations to come under inspection were those at Horse Shoe Bend. They were found to be healthy, and all the trees were doing well. It was suggested, however, that the tussocks skirting the edge of this plantation should be kept ploughed under, or a track chipped all round to guard against fire. The party then passed the Burkes Pass cemetery, a place which could not be said to do credit to the council. Further on, a noticeable improvement was noted at Edwards Creek, where the councillors made a halt to inspect the work. A halt was made at Tekapo for lunch, and the hotel property closely inspected. From there could be seen the seventy-acre new reserve which Mr M. Fitzgerald had just finished planting in larch and other trees.

From this point onwards the roads were not so good, here and there ruts requiring filling. Through the Balmoral property the roads in some places were a little soft, and the advantage of a side track was apparent. There was a discussion on gates, when it was noted that from Balmoral Station to Mr Burnett's Mount Cook Station, a distance of about fourteen miles, there were no less than thirteen gates, nearly one to the mile. Mount Cook Station was reached on Tuesday night by six o'clock, and the party stayed there for the

night. An early start was made next morning for the Hermitage. The drive from Mr Burnett's place across the long Tasman River bed was enjoyable although at times rather rough. Fortunately, the main stream was low, and with so capable a pilot as Mr Donald Burnett, and the trustworthy team under Mr Hamilton's guidance, all the streams were negotiated safely.

From the river to the Hermitage, not a great deal had to be done, but a note was made of slips, boulders, etc., that needed attention. On the Wednesday, the Hermitage was reached before lunch, where Mr and Mrs Ross extended a cordial welcome, and put them into very comfortable quarters. The suspension bridge over the Hooker at the base of Mount Cook was inspected and found to be in need of repair. It was mentioned that the council was not responsible, but the Government. It rained very heavily at the Hermitage, but this enabled the councillors to see what the roads were like in wet weather. Passing round the Sebastopol Hill, about five chains of road were in need of repair. Near Glentanner, the road was very good, but some work was needed before the summer season. A halt was made at the Half Way House, between the Hermitage and Pukaki. The horses were fed, a capital lunch partaken of, and a toast to "the Government" for providing such a building was drunk in champagne.

Proceeding on the journey, the roads through old Glentanner were driven over. They needed repair and in places, where it was soft, in need of draining. Round the shores of Lake Pukaki, and through Rhoborough Downs, the roads were in fair order, but needed some improvement. It was intended to visit Ben Ohau, but the evening was far too advanced, so that visit had to be abandoned. The party stayed the night at Pukaki Hotel, and an inspection was made before breakfast of the willow planting which had been carried out at the bridge for protection purposes. Mr and Mrs Bell were described as being most attentive to the visitors. Considerable improvement could be made to the Pukaki Hotel, but the councillors thought that in view of the possibility of the route from Fairlie to the Hermitage being altered they were not prepared to suggest any. Pukaki was left shortly after nine o'clock on the morning after arrival, and Tekapo was reached on the return journey. On the hill by Balmoral Station some big stones (which appeared to have been put there in anticipation of the visit) required moving, but no other improvement was suggested. The road through The Wolds was found to be well shingled, but its chief requirement seemed to be more traffic. The Forks River bridge was in good condition. The afternoon at Tekapo was spent in inspecting the plantation reserve, which Mr Fitzgerald had just completed for the council.

Taking a boat, the party rowed across the lake to Mr Schlaepfer's island home, where they were most welcome. The move was made for the purpose of ascertaining the result of an experiment in planting marram grass on a sandbank near the lake, with the object of stopping sand drifts. It appeared to serve the purpose well. Staying at Tekapo for the night, a change of horses was made, Mr Rutherford on this occasion supplying the team, and in the morning a start was made for home.

Passing Edwards Creek, the road known as the Dog Kennels was driven over, and along the Whales Back flat. It was noticed that a well formed and high-crowned road here had been left in disuse, and tussocks allowed to grow over it, while a side track was being utilised. The road from here to Grays

Hills was found to be in very good order. An invitation to lunch with Mr and Mrs Grant was accepted here, and a move was made for Black Forest later in the day. Between Grays Hills and Haldon Station the road in places was somewhat rough, but could be put in order at very little expense. Mr and Mrs Preston cordially welcomed the councillors who had shown themselves sufficiently interested to visit such an out-of-the-way part of the county, and, after passing the night here, a start was made for home on Sunday morning.

By noon the Grampians Station was reached, and lunch taken with Mr McRae. The councillors examined the road line which Mr McRae desired changed. Leaving the Grampians, Burkes Pass was reached, and Rollesby Valley road. It was noted that certain works were necessary. From there the party travelled over to Ashwick Station, and at a quarter past six Mr Hamilton drew rein at the front door of his beautiful Ashwick homestead. The tour over, the councillors accepted an invitation to spend the night at Ashwick. It is said that the next day the councillors returned with every detail of the requirements of the district.

#### AFFORESTATION AT LAKE TEKAPO

As early as March 1880, the Mount Cook Road Board asked the Minister of Lands for a return of plantation reserves in the Mount Cook district, informing him that the Board wanted the reserves vested in them, with a view to planting forest trees. Then, in December 1882, the Minister was asked to vest the planting reserves at Horse Shoe Bend in the Board to devote the proceeds of their rentals for tree planting.

In October 1892, the Minister approved of the rents received from the plantation reserves in the Tekapo Riding being paid to the council for planting purposes. Upon a report being presented as to the extent, character, etc., of the planting carried out of Reserve 2923, and a certificate that the work carried out represented a value of £100, the funds available (£50/1/10) would be paid over. A portion of the reserve was fenced in and planted. Six thousand trees had been planted by Mr M. Fitzgerald at 2/- per 100, on a two years guarantee. In September 1893, on account of the favourable season for tree planting, it was decided to plant with forest trees the unplanted portion of Reserve 2923, no planting to be undertaken the following year. Mr Fitzgerald was allowed £20 for planting up trees killed by rabbits in the plantation. Later it was agreed that Mr George Alves be empowered to put a man on from Balmoral Station once a week for looking after the wire fence at the Tekapo plantation, and killing any rabbits in the enclosure.

In June 1894, the Commissioner of Crown Lands advised that on an inspection of the plantation, it was found that some of the trees were being barked, and even cut right down by rabbits. He suggested the use of ferrets to drive them out of the burrows. He also said he had applied to the Government to pay to the council's credit £120/11/4 as a subsidy for planting. The Commissioner was advised that the council were taking steps to destroy the rabbits, and ensure the success of the plantation.

A letter from Mr Fitzgerald stated that he had to plant 14,350 trees in the renewal of planting, that 2350 would be a fair allowance for natural failures, and the remaining 12,000 had been destroyed by rabbits. He was willing to bear one-third of this loss, but asked to be paid for 8000.

In October 1895, Mr Arthur Hope, a councillor, submitted a written report on an examination of the Tekapo plantation. Beginning at the top, he found that most of the trees there — insignis, spruce and larch — had died a natural death, and they had been renewed by the contractor with menziesii, douglassii, and larch. On the Mount John side, at the bottom, there were a great many killed by rabbits. Almost without exception the mountain ash, the common ash, oak and birch, though eaten and barked right to the ground, were alive and quite green just below the surface, and likely to throw up shoots from the ground. He saw no rabbits or fresh signs of rabbits, but saw some dead ones.

In 1896 there was a serious fire in the Tekapo plantation. The clerk was directed to give the Land Board an account of the damage done by the fire, and draw the Board's attention to the fact that the council could not see their way to expend any more of the ratepayers' money on the plantation, and asked if the Board would devote rents from the plantation reserves in the Mackenzie County for that purpose. The Minister of Lands approved of this being done.

#### PUKAKI BRIDGE

As late as September 1893, a report was presented to the effect that the Pukaki punt required a general overhaul. It was decided that the work stand over in the meantime, pending a decision of the Government as to the erection of a bridge access across the river. The following month a letter was received from Mr A. E. G. Rhodes, the member for the district, stating that it was understood the Government had promised to place £800 on the supplementary estimates for the Pukaki bridge. He, with Major Steward and Mr Hall-Jones, had interviewed the minister several times during the session, urging that £1200 might be granted, but he refused to grant so much. A letter from Major Steward on the same matter stated that a sum of £600 had been voted for the purpose. He advised the council to ascertain the lowest sum for which the work could be completed. The engineer was directed to prepare plans and specifications for the bridge, with an estimate of the cost to be laid before the Government for consideration.

In December the engineer submitted his plans. He estimated the cost at £1700, and approached at £50. He reported that a slightly lighter bridge constructed of New Zealand timber, to carry ordinary traffic, could be built for £150 less, but on account of the want of durability and the high cost of maintenance he could not recommend it. The council then agreed to take advantage of the offer of the Government subsidy for the work. The plans and specifications were forwarded to the Government for approval, the amount required by the council to be raised by loan. The Government enquired if the council would provide the balance over the £600 subsidy. The council regretted that in the present state of their finances they would not be justified in finding such a large proportion of the cost for a work which does not benefit more than two or three ratepayers in the county, but stating that it would be willing to find half the cost up to £1700 by way of loan. The Minister of Lands agreed to place an additional sum of £250 on the estimates, the council being required to contribute £850. A loan was raised for this amount. In August 1894, a tender of £1698/13/6 from Sutherland and Nelson, of Port Chalmers, was accepted. It was later decided that rabbit-proof gates would be attached to the bridge.

#### OPENING OF PUKAKI BRIDGE

Councillors let their hair down when the Pukaki bridge was opened on Tuesday, 12th March 1895. The whole council attended from the close of the council meeting on Monday and did not return home till Wednesday. Tekapo was reached on Monday evening, Pukaki about midday on Tuesday, and the party returned on Wednesday, having been favoured with beautiful weather. At Pukaki the coach was at once driven to the bridge. The entrance was formally blocked by red, white and blue ribbons stretched across, and the team pulled up. The chairman, Mr E. Richardson, severed the ribbon, broke a bottle of champagne on the railing, and declared the bridge open. Mr Rutherford then drove over the bridge.

In the evening settlers from the neighbouring stations, the workers, a few wayfarers, with the council, made up quite a party at the Pukaki Hotel. A public "congratulations meeting" was held out-of-doors in the moonlight. Among the speeches was one by the inspector of works, Mr Simpson, who claimed that he was one of those who constructed the first punt for the Tekapo ferry about thirty years previously. The formal business over, the councillors resumed business indoors, where many toasts were celebrated. Another party occupied a larger room, and celebrated the event of the day with dance and song, keeping it up far into the small hours.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE PUKAKI BRIDGE

A description of the Pukaki bridge makes interesting reading at this distance, and gives some idea of the nature of bridge-building in 1894. The bridge was described as a perfectly plain and simple but substantial structure, consisting of thirteen 30ft spans, with earth approaches defended from the river by rubble retaining walls. The superstructure was carried by piers of piles, three in each, braced diagonally by railway irons, and tied at water level by similar means, and by stout beams across the tops. Short capsils resting on the latter bear five longitudinal joints, three of them 18in by 10in, and on these rested a 4in hardwood decking, 12ft wide inside the guard rail.

The bridge was designed to carry traction engine traffic, and as the timber was Australian hardwood would be strong enough for the purpose, retaining its strength for many years. The site was a peculiar one. Lake Pukaki was drained by a river, which a few yards only from the lake broke into a rapid over a narrow bank of boulders stretching straight across. The site selected was a few feet above this cascade, which evidently represented a permanent bank of morainic boulders, possibly having a rock-rib underlying them. The bank dipped so deeply into the lake that the upper pile of each pier was in appreciably deeper water than the lower one.

The pile-driving was extremely hard and slow work, one occasion seven hours' work being spent in getting a pile down as many feet, at about sixty blows per hour. The presence of huge boulders prevented the piles from being put down in exact line, but they did not err unreasonably, and all were put down to a firm bearing. The superstructure was well above the highest flood level, and, taken altogether, the bridge was an excellent one of great convenience to the few settlers to the south who required to use it, and of great advantage to the tourist traffic.

## AN EXTENSION MOVE THAT FAILED

In June 1894, a communication was received from Mr C. G. Tripp, Orari Gorge, asking whether in the event of a proposal to form the Mount Peel and Geraldine districts into a county falling through, there would be any means by which his country could be included in the Mackenzie County. He also asked if the council would be prepared to take over other lands besides his own. The council replied by suggesting that the ratepayers interested be approached.

In August, a deputation was received from Messrs C. G. Tripp, A. Dunnett, W. Dixon, J. Wilson, R. Mackay and Geo. I. Hamilton with reference to the inclusion in the Mackenzie County boundaries of a portion of the Mount Peel district. In the discussion which followed, Messrs Mackay and Wilson said that they would not agree to have their country taken over by the Mackenzie County unless the new country were constituted a separate riding with a separate riding account, and have two representatives on the council. It was agreed that the necessary steps be taken to have the required Bill passed.

In September, the required notice was published, naming that part of Geraldine County, being also that part of the Mount Peel Road District, to the west of the Orari, and also runs Nos 1, 2, 3, 4 and 210 and some of the contiguous freeholds. A separate riding was provided for, and also provision for the dividing of assets and liabilities. A description of the area at that time explained that the whole of the Geraldine County, except the land proposed to be dealt with by the Bill, was either plains or low-lying downs, and therefore that the interest of the ratepayers in the part affected, and of those in the rest of the county, were not identical. Rabbits first made their appearance on the hills, and this pest would be best dealt with by joining the Mackenzie County, which is nearly entirely composed of pastoral land similar to that covered by the Bill. Other like reasons were also given.

Then there was a blunt announcement: "The Hon. L. Walker withdrew the Mackenzie County Boundary Extension Bill on account of the adverse report of the Local Bodies Committee, and on account of expected opposition in the house." Although Lancelot Walker had earlier been a member of the House of Representatives, at this time he was a Legislative Councillor. The county solicitor then reported that the Bill had been discharged because the Local Bills Committee considered the people interested had not had sufficient time to consider it.

## A SPATE OF PETITIONS

The Mackenzie County Council must have wondered what had struck it on 6th August 1894 when seven petitions were considered, one after another, at the one meeting which was in the nature of a marathon. The council met at 11 a.m. and, with short intervals for lunch and tea, carried on right through until 10 p.m.

A petition was read, signed by Mr A. S. Smith and other ratepayers in the Waratah district, asking the council to reconsider the matter of having the Limestone Valley road opened up for light traffic. They wished it to be understood that they would be satisfied with an expenditure of £20. The application was granted to the extent of £20. Mr H. G. Smith and eight other ratepayers of the Albury Riding petitioned the council to deviate a portion of the Albury to Mackenzie Pass Road, near Mr Sutherland's homestead, which was

dangerously near to a wire fence. They also asked that portions of the same road should be shingled, more especially through the Waratah estate. It was agreed that the engineer interview Mr Sutherland and report on the matter.

The third petition was read, signed by Messrs Young and Co. and six other ratepayers of Fairlie, asking that a footpath be formed and shingled fronting their premises on the main road between Mr Fraser's furnishing shop and the library corner. A report on the cost of the work was requested for the next meeting. The fourth petition was from Mr D. Ross and eight other ratepayers of the Albury Riding, asking the council to have the road from Mackenzie Pass through Rollesby Valley to Burkes Pass repaired, and the tussock chopped off, and the soft portions shingled. This also was deferred till the next meeting for a report as to cost.

Then there was a petition signed by twenty-four residents in the Cannington district asking that the piece of road from Cannington School to the Pareora River be formed as soon as possible. It was decided that the engineer expend a sum not exceeding £5 in the improvement of the road. And, finally, there were two petitions from Albury and Cave, signed by sixteen and thirteen ratepayers respectively, asking that a local man might be appointed at Albury and Cave as surfaceman in charge of the roads in Albury Riding. Mr J. S. Rutherford gave notice of motion, "That one married surfaceman reside at the Cave and another at Albury, and that the men at present working for the council be offered such positions, and in the event of their refusal the council advertise for applications for the post, the wages of such surfacemen to be 7/- per day."

The next meeting decided in respect of Mr H. G. Smith's petition to procure Mr Sutherland's written permission to allow a temporary deviation of the Albury to Waratah road near his homestead. It was also decided that the shingle work on the Waratah Road be done when men are in the locality. The application for a footpath from Fairlie library to Fraser's was held over till the following autumn, a few loads of shingle to be put down to make it passable. Regarding the fourth petition, the engineer's proposals for the draining and chipping of tussocks off the Rollesby Valley road was agreed to as soon as convenient.

There must have been a hitch in carrying out the formation of a piece of road from Cannington School to the Pareora River. Mr Rutherford complained that the £5 voted had not been expended where the settlers wished it. The engineer having explained how the mistake had arisen, it was resolved to grant another £5 for the road. Mr Rutherford's notice of motion relating to the last two petitions was then dealt with. It was seconded pro forma by Mr Richardson, and after some discussion was lost by five votes to one.

#### UNEMPLOYED LABOUR

The way in which unemployed labour was handled last century is interesting. The Mackenzie County Council took twenty-one men from Timaru and employed them from 7th October 1895 to 6th January 1896. The previous July the Lands Department had intimated that in order to provide work for the unemployed of Timaru, the men must be put on, in the expenditure of Government grants for Pukaki-Omarama roads, otherwise the agreements for the paying over of the money to the council would be cancelled.

It was decided to put the work in hand as soon as "the snow is gone". At the same time the Chief Surveyor in Christchurch stated that a progress payment could not be passed until the work was actually in hand, and that a proposal to spend the whole of the second grant on the Canterbury side of the Ohau River had been referred to headquarters for approval.

The men left by train, proceeding to the work which was thirty miles distant from Fairlie by coach, arriving in the evening. They could find their own way if they wished, but those going by train and coach had the fares deducted from their earnings. Mr R. L. Banks, the engineer, informed the Labour Department that initially he could take, say, a dozen men, including a cook at 25/- a week and found, a blacksmith at 8/- a day, and a quarryman at 7/- a day. The work to be done was ordinary navvying. It would be let in small contracts based so as to return 6/- for a fair day's work. Any day work was done at 6/- a day. Tents were supplied on the ground for the men's use. The men were found by the country council, the cost of stores and cook's wages being divided equally amongst the men and deducted from their earnings.

The work was in charge of Mr J. O'Connor who had power to dismiss any man on a day's wages who was not working to his satisfaction, also any man guilty of intemperance on the work. Such time as the overseer considered reasonable was allowed to the men when shifting camp. Knife and fork, plate and pannikin, were supplied to each man, the cost deducted from earnings. Tobacco, matches, candles and soap were procurable in the camp at cost price. Tools were supplied for the work. Only working time was paid for. The blacksmith and quarryman were required to do ordinary road work when so directed by the overseer. The mayor of Timaru (Mr Jacob Hill) and Mr Crawford, the Labour Bureau agent, selected the men. Number of dependents, ability, and length of time out of work were among the chief points considered. There were about 30 names on the bureau list, but others could have their names added if they wished.

Mr Banks was in attendance at the selection. He said he had £300 to spend, and could put on twenty men immediately, of whom he had already selected two teamsters and four others at Fairlie, so that he could take fourteen from Timaru, of whom there must be a cook, a smith and a quarryman. The fourteen chosen had in all sixty-six children. They were told the work was expected to last about twelve weeks, and consisted of improvements to the road at Forks Rivers, and between Simon's Pass and Pukaki. It was reported that the men seemed satisfied when they were paid off, and the work was done very satisfactorily. "They seemed to be a good lot of men."

#### MELVILLE DOWNS WATER DISTRICT

Mr G. F. Clulee, as attorney for L. A. Macpherson, asked the council to proceed with the necessary steps to carry out the proposed water supply for Melville Downs. In order to avoid the delay in following the statutory course exactly, he suggested that the council should push on with the work at once, he paying interest on the cost. It was agreed to act upon this suggestion, and tenders be called, on an understanding given by Mr Clulee that interest will be paid on the amount advanced until the loan money was raised. At a special meeting of the council held on the same day, a special order was adopted that

the Fairlie water district be subdivided by cutting off certain rural sections, to be named "Melville Downs sub-division of the Fairlie Water District".

This provoked a violent reaction from settlers concerned in the Ashwick Flat water race. They held a meeting in the school at Ashwick Flat to obtain an expression of opinion as to the right of the Mackenzie County Council to give to the Melville Downs estate water from the Ashwick Flats without consulting the settlers. It was moved and passed that the council should not confirm its resolution. Then Mr James Dillon moved, and Mr R. Allan seconded, "that as the Ashwick Flat thirds are mortgaged to secure the capital that constructed the races, and as the whole of the works, according to the Act, are for our sole use and benefit, and, further, as we have consented to do without roads and so forth until the loan is paid, and as we have signed to be rated if the thirds would not pay the loan, we hold that the water is ours, and that no person has power to take it away from us."

Then, on 11th March 1895, Treasury advised that a loan of £100 for Melville Downs water races had been provisionally granted, subject to the necessary steps being taken. At the same time a number of letters were read from settlers objecting to the Melville Downs water race extension. The matter was left over till a deputation was heard. This deputation consisted of Messrs Jones, Allan and Dillon, who presented the grounds for their opposition. The council regretted that it could not accede to their wishes. It was further decided that Mr John Ross be appointed to preside at a meeting of ratepayers in the special rating district, concerning the raising of the loan and the rating provisions. In April, Mr O'Callaghan, the Crown Lands Ranger, presented to the council the views of Ashwick Flat settlers against the proposal, and in May Mr Clulee wished to ascertain what was intended to be done regarding water charges.

One cannot help wondering whether the law is an ass, or how silly can you get. A poll of ratepayers in the Melville Down subdivision was held on Tuesday, 26th March 1895, at Mr Robert Scott's house, Melville Downs, on the proposal to borrow £100 for the purpose of constructing water races in the said subdivision. In all seriousness the results were published in the New Zealand Gazette: "Number of ratepayers within the special district, 1, capable of exercising 4 votes. Number of ratepayers who voted in favour of the proposal, 1, exercising 4 votes. Number of votes against the proposal, 0." Then there is a solemn declaration that the proposal had been carried. One can only presume that the meeting of ratepayers presided over by councillor John Ross was most interesting.

#### TRACTION ENGINES

The steam traction engine was introduced into the South Island in 1872, but, like every innovation, there were those who welcomed it and those who did not. Controversy in the Mackenzie County reached such a pitch that at one stage the council refused to grant licences for their use. The council were not slow in enacting by-laws governing the use of these machines, and regulations were prepared in 1891 to cover all aspects of traction engines, defined as locomotive engines not being used on railway or tramway, technical requirements, issue of permits, registration, drivers, etc. Trouble started when the council received a letter from Mr Thomas R. Seddon on 12th February

1894, strongly protesting against the council's action in allowing traction engines to make use of the county roads, and giving notice that he would hold the council responsible for any damage that might arise to any of his stock or property. He complained of the danger to life and property caused by traction engines travelling on the country roads, which in many places were narrow, and difficult or impossible to get out of safely.

The council showed much sympathy with Mr Seddon's views. The chairman, Mr McGregor, said that, contrary to stipulation, traction engines were driven across Tekapo bridge without planks, and with trucks also attached. It was resolved to inform an owner of engines, Mr H. F. Chaffey, that as he had treated the traction engine by-laws framed for his guidance in crossing the Tekapo bridge with contempt, the penal clauses would be enforced, and the council would seriously consider the question of granting him any further permission to travel over the county roads.

This decision provoked a rejoinder through the columns of the *Timaru Herald* by Thomas Shaw, proprietor of the Mount Cook coaches. He commented on the wonderful improvement that had been made on the Mackenzie country roads through traction engines travelling over them for the purpose of carrying wool. The road between Fairlie and Tekapo, which used to be exceedingly rough in some places with boulders and rocks projecting through the metal, making it both dangerous and unpleasant for tourist traffic, was now quite smooth. The same change was experienced in travelling over the road from Tekapo to Pukaki. He had not the slightest doubt that Mr Chaffey had rendered the county most substantial service by forming what were before merely rough tracks into roads pleasurable to drive over. Legal advice was then received that the council had legal power under its by-laws to stop traction engines weighing over six tons from crossing any bridge or culvert.

Things came to a head in November when Mr H. F. Chaffey applied for a renewal of his licences for two trucks and traction engines. It was moved that the application be granted, provided the engine be not taken across Tekapo bridge. The new chairman of the council, Mr E. Richardson, moved an amendment, seconded by Mr McGregor: "That on and after 1st January [1895], the permission granted to Mr Chaffey to run his engine cease." This amendment was carried, and on the solicitor's suggestion the date extended to 31st March. Mr Hope asked that his dissent be recorded. In June the engineer reported that Chaffey had travelled over the county roads during the month, contrary to instructions. It was decided to take legal action, but the county solicitor, Mr C. H. Tripp, in consultation with another solicitor, Mr Hay, advised that the by-laws went beyond the powers conferred by the Act. An action therefore could not be sustained. The seal to new by-laws was affixed on 27th November 1895. The following year, these new by-laws were challenged in open court. Robert Drysdale, tractor engine owner, was charged with unlawfully using in the Mackenzie County, on 4th May 1896, a traction engine which together with the weight carried thereon weighed more than one and a half tons for each pair of wheels, on a roading leading from Coal Creek to Rocky Gully, without the traction engine being fully licensed etc.

The case was a lengthy one, Mr Hay (for Mr Tripp) appearing for the prosecution, and Mr Raymond for the defendant. The facts were not disputed, and Mr Raymond submitted some points of law which Mr Hay described as

intricate. Mr Raymond asserted that the by-law was bad, Mr Hay upholding the by-law on behalf of the council. In a lengthy decision, the judge concluded by saying, "I conclude that the county council have gone beyond their powers in extending to private traction engines, what they could only apply to public vehicles, and that the by-law is bad, and will not support the information, which is dismissed."

The county appealed against the decision, and Mr Justice Denniston in Christchurch gave this decision in Banks v Drysdale: "It will be remembered that the appellant, the clerk of the Mackenzie County Council instituted proceedings against Mr Drysdale for not procuring a license for his traction engine pursuant to the county by-laws. At the hearing before Mr Wray, stipendiary magistrate, objection was taken on behalf of the defendant by Mr Raymond, his counsel, that the by-law was ultra vires and the magistrate co-incided with this argument, and dismissed the information with costs. From this decision the informant appealed, and the matter was considered of so much importance, that other county councils shared with the Mackenzie County Council the cost of the appeal."

Messrs Joynt and Tripp appeared for the appellant, and Mr Kippenberger (instructed by Smithson and Raymond) for the respondent. The judge, in a considered judgment, dismissed the appeal with ten guineas costs.

#### WATER RACES TO FAIRLIE TOWNSHIP

The initial move to have a water race supply from Silverstream was made when the council received a deputation from Dr Hornibrook and Mr J. Binney, asking that the necessary steps be taken to procure a water race supply from Silverstream. The engineer was directed to make a trial survey and estimate the cost. In February 1898, the Three Springs-Fairlie Water Race District was constituted.

A public meeting was held at which it was said there was a good attendance. Mr F. R. Gillingham explained the proposal, and a resolution was carried unanimously that the council be asked to go on with the scheme. A loan proposal to raise £850 for the project was carried, 70 ratepayers exercising 79 votes in favour, 1 against exercising 1 vote, and 55 not voting. In June the engineer was instructed to proceed with the survey of the race at once, keeping the main race on the northern side of the main road until he found it necessary to cross the road to give the necessary fall to the township.

In October a tender of £173/10/- from D. Gregan was accepted for construction of a portion of the race, and another contractor was apparently Mr Foden for fluming. In May 1899, Mr P. McEvoy was appointed ranger from seven applicants for the position. By-laws were enacted relating to the race as from 1st July. In October Mr McEvoy reported that the Three Springs-Fairlie water races were running satisfactorily, but some places were blocked with rubbish, and some people were putting foul water into the races, taking no notice of the council's warning.

#### AN INTERESTING INTERVIEW

In January 1898, the Minister of Public Works (the Hon. W. Hall-Jones) and Mr W. J. Steward (the member for Waitaki) were at Fairlie on their way to Mount Cook. Mr F. R. Gillingham and Mr R. L. Banks waited on the minister on behalf of the council. The first question raised was the importance

of the Government constructing a traffic bridge over the Forks River. Having seen that £300 had been put on the estimates last session, an insufficient sum, inquiry was made as to what it was intended for. The reply was that it was intended to be the Government's contribution toward the cost of the bridge, if the county council would find the balance, Mr Banks's estimate being £600.

Mr Gillingham pointed out that the bridge would be of little use to county ratepayers, and should be a colonial work in the interests of tourist traffic. Mr Hall-Jones pointed to Pukaki bridge, of which the council had paid half the cost, and the chairman replied that they had saved money by that, as it relieved them of maintaining a punt service. Mr Hall-Jones promised to lay the matter before his colleagues. Mr Gillingham then mentioned the matter of extending the telephone line from Tekapo to the Hermitage, saying that it would be an aid to tourist traffic, by enabling business men and others to keep in touch with their businesses and their friends. Major Steward strongly supported the proposal. The minister thought it could hardly be a serious proposition. As to visitors to the Hermitage keeping in touch with their businesses, he understood that one of the charms of Mount Cook was that a visitor could, by going there, cut himself off from the outside world.

#### FAIRLIE MEDICAL SERVICE

In January 1896, Mr Malcolm McLeod asked the council as a Board of Health to take the responsibility of engaging a medical man for the district in place of Dr Douglas D. Dryden, whose three-year term of appointment had expired. Messrs F. R. Gillingham and T. R. Seddon, as representing the medical committee, and A. O. Gilmour and J. V. Morgan, on behalf of the Gladstone Lodge of Oddfellows, Fairlie, waited on the council on this subject. It was decided to insert an advertisement in the principal papers in the colony, calling for applications from duly qualified medical men to settle in Fairlie, the successful applicant to be appointed health officer to the council at £52 per annum.

From four applicants, Dr W. H. Hornibrook was appointed. He was supplied with a sketch plan of the township of Fairlie, including the Government township, as the radius within which he was to make no charge for mileage. It was also agreed that the charge of midwifery cases be left to the doctor himself. An agreement was drawn up, signed by the council chairman, and sealed. In April 1902, Dr S. J. Cook succeeded Dr Hornibrook as health officer. Dr Cook died in 1911.

#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

Judging in retrospect in 1983, when local government reform is still a debatable issue, it seems strange that nearly a century ago, in September 1895, the prospect of a Local Government Reform Act merging the Mackenzie County with some other was debated seriously by the council, and steps proposed to meet the situation. The chairman (Mr E. Richardson) said he desired to raise an important matter. They had all heard of the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill to reform local government, and it seemed likely that the Bill would be passed, and the effect of it would be to merge the Mackenzie County with some other. Now they had a balance of about £1000 in the bank, and it was for them to consider whether it was judicious to spend

this balance while they had it, or leave it to be divided up with some other county. Many ratepayers had to borrow money at 8% to pay their rates, while the council was only getting 4½% on their balance. He suggested that the money would be well spent on the main road, which was in a weak state; and if no such change referred to took place, the work would have been done, and future rates could be spent on other roads.

Mr J. S. Rutherford did not anticipate that the new law would come into force immediately, and he could not approve of any proposal to squander the money. Mr McGregor expected that existing funds would be kept for the counties now owning them. Mr McLeod agreed with the chairman, provided the money could be spent judiciously. He did not believe in hoarding balances, especially when it was so hard for the ratepayers to hold their own, and many of them had to borrow to pay their rates. It would be better to use the balance and not strike a rate. It was decided to ask Mr F. R. Flatman, member for Pareora, to procure a copy of the Bill at once.

The question was next discussed in 1898, when a remit to a Counties Association conference from the Kaikoura County was considered. Among several objections to the Local Government Bill, it was proposed that instead of subsidy on rates, a capitation on population should be substituted. This would be hard on sparsely populated counties like Kaikoura and Mackenzie, and should be opposed as strongly as possible. Other objections were the absorption of counties into larger areas, one man one vote, and chairmen elected by voters. It was decided to oppose a Hawera County remit that all rating should be on unimproved value. It was sufficient to leave it optional.

The chairman (Mr F. R. Gillingham, who had succeeded Mr Richardson) attended the conference, and reported that there were six delegates from Canterbury, but only one from Otago. He sat out the conference for about six days, but he did not think much good had been done. A deputation waited on the Prime Minister (Mr Seddon), asking him if he intended to proceed with the Bill. He replied that he could not do so this session, but that it would require a special session. As to the present system of plural voting, he had made up his mind to do away with it. The conference passed a number of amendments to the Bill, but whether the Government would take any notice of them was another thing.

The Government did not go ahead with local government reform at that point, and this vexed question was shelved to raise its head again early in 1912.

#### HOSPITAL AND CHARITABLE AID BOARD

From 1886 to 1911, the Mackenzie County Council appointed annually a representative to the South Canterbury Hospital and Charitable Aid Board. Over that period the following appointments were made direct by the council, but after that Mr Gillingham remained on the board until 1920, having been on the board for twenty-nine years and its chairman for thirteen years.

1886 to 1887	George F. Clulee
1887 to 1889	Dr James Francis Lovegrove
1889 to 1890	Dr Richard Bowen Hogg
1890 to 1891	Captain Francis Hayter
1891	Dr Charles Ernest Thomas
1891 to 1911	Francis Robert Gillingham

There was liaison between the Hospital and Charitable Aid Board and the council regarding charitable aid or relief as it was called. Annually the board would supply the council with estimates of receipts and expenditure, and also a monthly return of recipients of charitable aid, the number of patients discharged from hospital, and the names of recipients discontinued. In April 1889 the board asked for the rateable value of the county, and the probable amount required for distribution to 31st March 1890, and the same information was requested the following year. This was probably required every year. Reports show that in August 1890, there were five recipients of charitable aid totalling £4/7/3½. Among the payments to the board by the council were £134/13/2 for 1887, and £341/15/2 for 1896. That the council took an interest in the running of the hospital is evidenced by the fact that in 1891 they queried an item in the balance sheet, and received a reply stating that the destitute children appearing on the balance sheet were "Fosters" in charge of Mrs Burgess, but that they had not been paid for since November 1890.

At the annual meeting of the council in 1895, Mr Gillingham, on his reappointment to the board, said it was a pleasure to have anything to do with the hospital, as everything worked so smoothly, but with regard to charitable aid the position was an unthankful one, as they had to listen to all sorts of whining yarns. It had to be done, however, and he was willing to do his share of it. This comment, and also a comment by the chairman, Mr Richardson, to the effect that the county had to pay an exorbitant sum to the board, and received very little for it, provoked a bitter reply in the press:

"Our own Charitable Aid Board works like a very badly balanced machine, too. The other day, one of the members told the local body which constitutes his constituency, that it was a pleasure to have anything to do with the hospital, as everything worked so smoothly, but charitable aid business was not a pleasure, because they had to listen to all sorts of whining yarns. The explanation of the difference is not far to seek. Let the Board try to run the hospital on the principle of stinginess and 'conserving the interests of the ratepayers,' which is applied to charitable aid administration, and what 'whining yarns' they would hear from that quarter. And let them deal as liberally with the charitably aided people as with the hospital, and it would be pleasure to have anything to do with them."

"As a matter of fact, the most 'whining yarns' are those told by members of the Board, and by some of the Boards who elect the members. As an example of the latter, recall the statement of a county chairman this week, that 'the county had to pay an exorbitant sum and received very little for it,' and compare this statement with the fact that this county receives every year from the general rates a subsidy in aid of charitable aid, to a greater amount than the county contributes to the Hospital and Charitable Aid Board — actually makes a profit out of the public charity. Talk about 'whining yarns' after that!"

#### STAFF RETRENCHMENT

In a time of economic recession, the question of staff retrenchment, which exercised the minds of the Mackenzie county councillors in 1897, was also uppermost in the minds of employers, both private and public, throughout the colony. In March of that year, the permanent staff was described as seven men and six horses, horses being numbered as though they were human.

The matter was raised by Mr A. H. McLean, who had given notice of motion, "That from 15th March 1897, the permanent staff be reduced, and that after that date, it consist of three men and two horses, and necessary plant." The chairman suggested that the motion be divided into two, and Mr McLean moved "That from 15th March the permanent staff be reduced." He said that three gangs cost about £300 a year each. They started the year with an overdraft, and they must cut down expenses, and try to keep within the rates, and even try to do with lower rates the next year. They could not do this if they kept up the present staff.

Mr J. S. Rutherford seconded the motion. The gangs had been too expensive altogether for the district. Mr McGregor told them some years ago that they would have to apply the pruning knife, and to keep on at this rate would be ruination. Some people said the roads were in a very bad state, but he failed to see it. The main thing needed was to get patching done. Mr M. McLeod said that the council must consider the roads as well as the pockets of the ratepayers; it was indisputable that many of the roads were in a bad state, and it would be penny wise and pound foolish to be economical one year, and have to spend ten times as much the next year to remedy the consequences of neglect. He mentioned several jobs that had been applied for and put off, and if the present staff could not keep up with the work, how could a smaller one do it? It could only be done by ignoring requirements.

Mr Wreford was sure they could not do with fewer men. Three men could hardly travel over all the roads. There were many small matters they could retrench in, but this would be a leap in the dark. They had now a very good staff — they could not replace them with better men. He must vote against the motion. Mr A. H. McLean said he preferred contract work. The motion to reduce the staff was carried on the casting vote of the chairman.

The chairman said the next question was the amount of the reduction. He thought some reduction was necessary, but he did not think three men and three horses would be sufficient. Messrs McLean and Rutherford moved that the permanent staff be reduced to three men and three horses, but Messrs Wreford and McLeod moved that it be reduced by two horses. Both amendment and motion were lost by four votes to two. The chairman then moved that the permanent staff be reduced to five men and four horses. Mr McLean seconded it, but both agreed later to four men and three horses. The motion was carried on the casting vote of the chairman, Messrs Hope, McLeod and Wreford opposing it.

#### THE FAIRLIE STAR

Some time between 7th and 23rd November 1898, a most scurrilous article was published, attacking the *Timaru Herald*. In short, the *Herald* had received an annual railway ticket for a nominal sum for the use of its literary staff, but the conditions upon which the reporters attended council meetings were that the *Timaru Herald* was supplied with a return first-class railway fare, together with luncheon for the reporter. The article said that the council was at the mercy of a monopolist press, and that the independent press had torn the mask off the *Herald's* face and exposed its dishonesty in all its nakedness. The full text of the article is given in Appendix II.

The question arises as to who wrote the article. It could not have been the *Timaru Morning Post*, as this paper started the following year. According

to Scholefield's *Newspapers in New Zealand*, in a lightning incursion into the district in 1898, Joseph Ivess started the *Geraldine Advocate*, and issued from the Geraldine office a chain of local tri-weeklies, the *Fairlie Star* (or *Standard*), the *Temuka Times*, and the *Pleasant Point Mail*. The *Fairlie Standard* ceased forthwith, but Henry Blair Stewart and Henry Thomas Rix (to whom all the papers were transferred), published it in 1899 under the title *Mackenzie County Chronicle*. By 1900 there were no vestiges of the whole chain.

This account does not quite fit in with the minutes of the Mackenzie County Council. On 7th November 1898, a letter was received from J. Ivess, proprietor of *Fairlie Star*, asking for a share of the council's advertising and printing. The minutes say that no action was taken in the meantime. On 23rd November, which would be soon after the article was published, the council decided on the motion of Mr A. H. McLean, seconded by Mr J. S. Rutherford, that payment of train fares and lunches to the *Timaru Herald* reporter be discontinued from that date. At the same meeting it was decided that tenders be called for the council's job printing and advertising for the ensuing twelve months, to be in by the next meeting, the *Fairlie Star* to receive its share of the council's advertising in the meantime. However, on 2nd January 1899, hardly six weeks later, a tender of J. Ivess, *Mackenzie County Chronicle*, was accepted for printing and advertising for twelve months at schedule prices. The minute said the *Timaru Herald* also tendered, but was informal. Twelve months later tenders were received from the *Gladstone Guardian*, the *Morning Post* and the *Timaru Herald*. All must have been forgiven as the *Timaru Herald* tender was the lowest and accepted.

The only conclusion that one can come to is that the scurrilous article was published in Joseph Ivess's transient publication, the *Fairlie Star*, which was renamed the *Mackenzie County Chronicle* before being transferred to Stewart and Rix. There is no mention of a *Fairlie Standard*.

#### FORKS RIVER BRIDGE CONTRACT

On 6th February 1899, the Chief Surveyor (Sidney Weetman), District Lands and Survey Office, Christchurch, advertised for written tenders for the Forks River bridge contract, described as the construction of a bridge 75ft or thereabouts, in three spans, with embankment approaches, over the Forks River, on the Mount Cook road, about five miles beyond Lake Tekapo. The advertisement stated that drawings, specifications and general conditions could be seen at his office, or the Lands and Survey Office, Dunedin, and the post offices in Timaru and Oamaru.

In September 1900, a party of inspection consisting of three councillors and a representative of the *Morning Post* reported that the Forks River bridge was found to be in good condition, and one had only to see how difficult it was to cross the river at that point to realise the utility of the bridge.

#### A MOST SERIOUS DRAINAGE PROBLEM

On 6th February 1899, a lady who shall be nameless waited on the council to object to drainage from Dr Hornibrook's house being allowed to flow into the water race running through her property. Although the minute book merely states that it was left to the engineer to attend to, the newspaper report was more colourful. It said that the lady was evidently under the impression

that gallons of gore from the bodies of those whom the doctor surgically operated on, as well as poisonous drugs of all sorts and descriptions, were pouring into the drain. She objected most strenuously to such filth flowing on to the land. "Why, oh why," she repeated more than once, "should I be the only one to feel this stink? Why shouldn't others have a sniff also? I pays my taxes and all I want is justice."

The report say that the genial chairman of the council (Mr F. R. Gillingham) diplomatically shifted the question by gently asking after her other grievances, of which she had several, and explained that a cheque for £8 would be signed in the afternoon as compensation for a water race taken through her land. The report says that the appeased lady departed smilingly and expectantly.

#### THE "BURDEN" OF RATES

Naturally, the Mackenzie County Council, following the policy of the erstwhile Mount Cook Road Board, showed an early resistance to the striking of rates, but inevitably these have risen perceptibly from about 1896.

On 3rd April 1882, the Mount Cook Road Board was under threat from the Geraldine County Council, of which it was part, to strike a rate for hospital and charitable aid purposes. The board responded by striking a rate of 3d in the pound, "as soon after the sitting of the Assessment Court as may be." In June Mr Thomas Caskey was appointed receiver of rates at Fairlie Creek for all small rates under £1., a commission of 10% being allowed.

Then, on 6th August 1883, just before the road board went out of existence, a general rate of a farthing in the pound for the year 1883 was struck, such rate to be payable on 16th September, amounts of not less than 6d to be collected. This level was maintained by the Mackenzie County Council up to and including the year ending 31st March 1891, except that in 1889 a Harbour Board rate was introduced starting at one-eighth of a penny in the pound. This was increased to a farthing in the pound, and then supplanted by an annual levy, the first being £352 for 1891.

The general rate was increased to a halfpenny until 31st March 1896, but the following year it went up to three farthings, dropping again to five-eighths of a penny for the year ending 31st March 1898. It remained at that level until 31st March 1903.

From this point differential rating was introduced. For the year ended 31st March 1904, the general rate was three farthings, but there was added another halfpenny for the Tekapo Riding only the following year. To 1906 it was three farthings for all the ridings, but each riding was designated separately. For the year ended 31st March 1907, it was Albury one penny, Cave one penny, Fairlie seven-eights of a penny, and Tekapo one and one-eighth of a penny in the pound. From that point, separate rating for each riding was the rule.

Today (1983), there is a general rate on the capital value of the whole county except the Fairlie Community, and a general rate on the land value for the Fairlie Community. There is also an administrative rate for the Catchment Board for both areas, and an administrative rate for the Waitaki Catchment Commission, covering basically the Mackenzie Basin. In addition there are varying water supply charges and rates, and sewerage charges according to the areas serviced, and in Fairlie there is a refuse collection charge.

## EDWARD RICHARDSON, JUNIOR

Edward Richardson, Junior, was always known as such to distinguish him from his well-known father. In 1868, the Canterbury Provincial Council granted Edward Richardson (senior) the Albury run as Crown land in part payment for the construction of the Lyttelton tunnel. He served for six years on the Provincial Council, was in Parliament for sixteen years between 1871 and 1890, and served as Minister for Public Works in nine ministries. He was a member of the Legislative Council from 1892 to 1899.

Edward Richardson, Junior, was a member of the Mackenzie County Council from 1883 to 1884 and again from 1893 to 1896, and chairman from 1894 to 1896 when he did not seek re-election as he was leaving the district. He was born in Melbourne in 1857, and educated at Christchurch Boys High School and Christ's College. After leaving school he was for some years on his father's estate at Albury. In 1889 the Bank of New Zealand took over the run, and young Edward managed it till it was acquired by the Government for closer settlement. In 1896 he gave up the managership of Albury, and retired to Grange Farm, near Temuka.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1894

### FAIRLIE PUBLIC HALL

A deputation consisting of Messrs J. Siegert, O'Donohue and A. H. Wopping, representing the Public Hall Company, Fairlie, asked that a corner portion of the pound section might be granted as a site for a public hall. The council agreed to lease the ground required for a term of ninety-nine years at a rental of £2/10/-, the company to shift the library back at their own expense.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1895

### HARBOUR BOARD RATES

The Timaru Harbour Board requested payment of £804/9/5 on the 1st August, being the board's levy to the Mackenzie County for the current year.

### HAKATARAMEA PASS ROAD

The manager of the Hakataramea estate asked for repairs to the Hakataramea Pass Road. It was decided that the engineer report and arrange to meet Mr Black of the Waimate County Council to define the county boundary, and settle the question once and for all. The engineer arranged for thirteen chains of formation to be done by Waimate County surfacemen, the question of shingling the newly formed road to stand over in the meantime.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1896

### MEDICAL CONGRESS

Mr Banks arranged for the Albury gang to go to Mount Cook Road, so that the Medical Congress party should be able to get through comfortably.

### TEKAPO TELEPHONE

The council entered into a bond to pay a subsidy of £40 per annum for five years to establish telephone communication between Burkes Pass and Tekapo. It was eventually opened on 15th June 1896.

#### BANKRUPT ?

A letter from the Public Trustee re the estate of Alexander Blackwood recommended that the council sell a section belonging to the estate for accumulated rates. The clerk stated that there must be some mistake, as the rates amounted to only 1/8.

#### COUNCILLORS' EXPENSES

In November Mr Rutherford moved and Mr McLean seconded that in future members of the council pay their own luncheon and horse feed expenses when attending council meetings. Mr Hope pointed out that he was considerably out of pocket, even by the present arrangement, and strongly opposed the motion, and this was endorsed by Mr McLeod. The motion was carried on the casting vote of the chairman.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1897

##### MARRAM GRASS

Enquiries were made of the Christchurch City Council as to the price of marram grass roots, and if the grass could probably stand the frosts at Lake Tekapo if planted in hill sand there. One hundredweight of the roots was ordered, and planted on the island in the lake.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1898

##### KIMBELL

Major Steward invited the council to suggest a new name for the Three Springs Post Office. It was recommended that it be named "Kimbeltown" after Mr F. J. Kimbell, the first owner of Three Springs estate. This was disallowed as it would be confused with Kimbolton. It was agreed to substitute "Kimbell" as a suitable name.

##### JAMES O'CONNOR

James O'Connor's resignation as ganger was accepted with regret, the council placing on record appreciation of his valued services over a period of eighteen years.

##### BIRDS' EGGS AGAIN

In October the council advertised that it would purchase eggs of blackbirds and thrushes, 4d a dozen; eggs of small birds, 2d a dozen. Heads of blackbirds and thrushes, 1/- a dozen all the year round; heads of other small birds during December and January, 3d a dozen, and during February to May, 4d a dozen.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1900

##### PUNAROA SETTLEMENT ROADS

The Chief Surveyor advised that a grant of £250 was available for Punaroa Settlement roads, the council to take over the new roads when formed and shingled. Grant accepted and tenders called.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1901

### PROTECTION OF KEAS

Mr J. S. Rutherford mentioned that he had heard that keas were to be "protected". If that was to be done, owners of hill runs might as well throw them up, as the birds did great damage to sheep. The chairman said there was no official information on the matter. It was agreed that if any movement was made toward protecting the kea, a formal protest must be made.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1902

### DR W. H. HORNIBROOK

Dr Hornibrook tendered his resignation as Health Officer in January. This was received with regret.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1903

### SYMPATHY NOT ENOUGH

Writing with reference to a certain road, a ratepayer said that for many years he had the sympathy of the engineer, but sympathy did not make a very good road.

### ALBURY CEMETERY

The Commissioner of Crown Lands advised that the area of cemetery at Albury had been fixed at one acre. It was decided to write to the Minister urging the need for two acres. The council had previously asked for five acres. The area was increased to two acres.

# 5

## Decade of Achievement, 1904-1913

### BRIDGING SOUTH CANTERBURY RIVERS

This was the heading of a newspaper leading article on the subject of erecting bridges over the Opihi River on Allandale Road at Fairlie, and the Tengawai River. In April 1904, the Geraldine County Council intimated that they would be prepared to meet the Mackenzie County Council by the contribution of £1 for £1 up to £1000 in the erection of a traffic bridge over the Opihi River at Fairlie. When Sir William Steward asked the Mackenzie council for a list of works requiring Government assistance, £1000 for the bridge over the Opihi River was included. In November 1905, Sir William advised that a vote of £500, £1 for £2 had been allowed, and he anticipated that the remaining £500 would be forthcoming the next financial year.

In February 1906, the Geraldine council agreed to share in the cost up to £1000. The Mackenzie council then decided to borrow £1000 for the Allandale road bridge, and another £1000 for the Tengawai bridge, the two sums to be included in the one proposal to borrow.

This produced a leading article in the *Timaru Post* which sounded a sour note, in that it was sceptical about the amount the Government would be willing to contribute. The *Post* said, "The Mackenzie County Council's decision to take a poll of ratepayers on a proposal to borrow £2000 for the purpose of constructing bridges across the Opihi and Tengawai Rivers is a step in the right direction. . . . We have already emphasised the necessity of a bridge over the Opihi near Fairlie, and are glad to see that the Geraldine County Council is prepared to bear an equal share with the Mackenzie County Council in the cost of the construction of this work. The Government has promised to grant £500 towards this bridge, but it is the opinion of the two councils interested, that the Government should give subsidy of £ for £ on the cost of this work. Thus it appears that the ratepayers of Geraldine and Mackenzie think that the taxpayers throughout the colony should be called upon to pay as much towards the cost of a bridge to be erected for their special benefit as they themselves pay. Of course, if their representatives in parliament can persuade the Government to see the matter in that light, we can only say that they are extremely fortunate in their representatives."

On 2nd November 1906, Sir William Steward reported that £500 had been voted by the Government for the Opihi bridge, and £500 for the Tengawai bridge, and similar amounts would be forthcoming the next session for the work. He subsequently advised that the Government had promised a vote of

£1000 for each bridge. The parliamentary representatives must have done their work well. On 28th November, a tender of £1476/7/6 by W. J. Black and Son of Timaru was accepted for the Tengawai bridge, and the following March, the Geraldine County Council advised that it had accepted a tender for £2350/5/- for the erection of the Opipi bridge. A supplementary tender of £434/1/3 from James Corbett was accepted for the approaches etc. to the Tengawai bridge.

Then, in October 1907, the Geraldine County Council suggested that the Mackenzie County Council increase its contribution to provide half the total cost of the bridge, together with a new road to connect the Allandale bridge with the Clayton Road at an estimated cost of £684. The council replied that it could not see its way to increase the contribution already promised, £1000. In February 1909, the Geraldine council forwarded a claim for £1177/16/9, share of cost of Allandale bridge. It was agreed that the balance of £1000 promised be paid over, and no more.

### THOSE TRACTION ENGINES AGAIN

*Timely mending saves much spending.*

— Proverb

One would have thought that with experience, revision of by-laws, and two court cases that went against the council, all questions as to the right of traction engines to operate would have been solved, but that was not the case. The use of the Tekapo bridge was the main bone of contention, although this was not the only area of concern. At the council's request Mr F. W. Marchant and Mr R. L. Banks submitted a joint report giving an estimate of the work required to render the Tekapo bridge safe for the passage of traction engines. With Mr R. Irving voting against the motion, it was decided that all permits be cancelled at once.

In a press interview in April 1905, the county chairman, Mr F. R. Gillingham, made it quite clear what he thought of traction engines. He said it seemed rough on the owners of the plants to want to turn them off the roads; but it was very hard for the council to go to heavy expense to make and maintain first-class roads, and then to have them all chopped to pieces by heavy traffic that was not really necessary. He said that the better and more expensive the road, the more it suffered. He also said that in wet weather, engines ploughed ditches in the soft back-country roads, big enough to bury horses in.

Then in July the Geraldine County Council convened a conference in Timaru on traction engine traffic. There were fifteen delegates present, and the main decision was that it should not be lawful to use a haulage engine or truck, the load of which exceeded 5 cwt per inch on width measured on the flat tread of the tyres, nor carry a greater weight than 5 tons on each truck, exclusive of the weight of such truck.

Then the trouble started once again. It was decided that Wigley and Thornley were to be allowed to cross the Tekapo bridge with a traction engine, provided, (1) that no wool from stations on the west side of the Tekapo River was taken beyond Fairlie railway station by road, (2) that the runholders interested guarantee to furnish the sum of £100 within six months towards the

cost of strengthening the Tekapo bridge for traction engine traffic, and (3) that the crossing over and back of the engine referred to across the bridge be done, subject to such conditions as the council engineer may think necessary, and under the supervision of Mr Schlaepfer.

The firm crossed the bridge without a permit, and legal action was taken against the driver, Henry Heron. The charge was that he had taken an engine more than five tons over the Tekapo bridge. Lengthy evidence and argument were given on both sides, the judge reserving his decision for a week, and then he gave a lengthy summing-up and verdict. He said there was nothing in the by-laws to legalise the imposition of any conditions, other than such as concerned the safety and protection of the bridge or its stability. He dismissed the information without costs.

In August the council decided that when the bridge was to be redecked, it be made fit for traction engine traffic. Mr R. Guthrie voted against the motion. The engineer was directed to procure the necessary timber as soon as possible.

New by-laws were made on 6th July 1906, one councillor commenting, "If this by-law breaks down we will never bother with another. It ought to be good enough; we have had plenty of legal talent employed upon it; nearly all the lawyers in Timaru have had a hand in it." He was wrong. In November the council proceeded against Samuel Thornley for using a traction engine on a road in the country, viz. the main Burkes Pass to Tekapo road, on 28th October without having such engine duly registered. Tripp and Rolleston reported that the case had gone against the council on a technical point. This led to new by-laws having to be drawn up and enacted in December.

#### THE RT HON. R. J. SEDDON'S VISIT

A visit of the Premier, the Rt Hon. Richard John Seddon, took place on 16th March 1904. The Premier arrived at Fairlie at 4 p.m., was welcomed by the chairman, school children being present. He was then driven to the Allandale bridge site, and the encroachment of the river at Silverstream. A deputation met him in the evening, a smoke concert was held with suitable refreshments, and an address was given by the Premier. Admission was fixed at 1/-, the balance of the cost being defrayed by the council.

The cost of the bridge at Allandale crossing was said to be £3000, and Government assistance was asked for, as the cost was beyond the reach of the two counties concerned. The Premier promised to explain the matter to the Minister of Lands. He also promised to consider the request for assistance in dealing with the river beyond Silverstream, the cost of which was estimated at £1360. After the tour of inspection, the party dined at the Gladstone Hotel, where the Premier and his party stayed.

In a report to the council, the chairman, Mr F. R. Gillingham, said that the visit had been made in good weather, and the Premier had seen the district at its best. Everything went off very well. They would have liked the Premier to stay longer, to press the wants of the district upon his notice. However, all they would have to do was to give him an occasional reminder.

It is interesting to note that just over two years later, when the council was asked by the mayor of Wellington for an opinion as to a Seddon memorial, they considered that a technical university would be the best form for a memorial to take.

## GAS LIGHTING FOR FAIRLIE

At the council meeting of 5th June 1905, it was reported that the chairman, Mr F. R. Gillingham, and Mr Robert Guthrie had made arrangements for installing three acetylene gas lamps in the streets of Fairlie, one at the back of the railway station, and one each at the Gorge and Allandale Road junctions with the main road. (Gorge Road is now Talbot Street.) Two lamps had been erected, and the other would be put in position that day. Mr W. M. Nisbet of Timaru had done the work in a thoroughly satisfactory manner. Each lamp was sixty candlepower, and the generator was placed in a shed at the back of the council's premises, about 40ft from the street. A meter was also put in to measure the amount of gas used, so that the council would be able to arrive at the cost per 1000 feet. The generator was of sufficient size to give a margin over the council's requirements, in order that, if necessary, private shops and dwellings might be supplied at such a price as would cover expenses to the council.

Of interest is the fact that in September 1907, a street lamp was erected at the public hall, Fairlie, and one near O'Dowd's shop, but that applications of J. King and A. O. Gilmore for a gas supply to their private houses were declined. Then, in October, C. J. Talbot, on behalf of the wardens of the English Church, applied for a street lamp to be erected at the church corner, and this was agreed to.

## A MEETING ON AN ISLAND

A special council meeting was held on the island in Lake Tekapo on 5th September 1905. The previous day, at the conclusion of the ordinary monthly meeting, the council adjourned and proceeded to Lake Tekapo and inspected the plantation on Reserve 2923.

Present at the special meeting were Messrs F. R. Gillingham (chairman), R. Irving, R. Guthrie, and J. S. Rutherford. Also present were the county clerk and engineer, Mr R. L. Banks, and Mr H. Millichamp of Messrs J. Millichamp and Sons, nurserymen. After a careful examination of the island, a discussion ensued upon the best method of carrying out the planting, with a view to the future use of the island as a pleasure resort, and instructions were given as to the carrying out of the planting.

The councillors were accompanied by a *Herald* reporter, who gave the trip a 23in write-up, followed a little later by another 10 inches entitled "Tekapo as a summer resort". Millichamp and Sons during the spring planted 12,500 trees of different varieties on the mainland, and 32,480 on the island.

## THE ADVENT OF THE MOTOR CAR

The introduction of the motor car into the Mackenzie country did not meet with the opposition meted out to the traction engine. The first mention in the council minutes is on 7th March 1904, when it was agreed that letters be written to Sir W. Steward and the Minister in charge of the Tourist Department, urging that a vote should be made to make the Fairlie-Pukaki road fit for motor cars, and advocating the use of motor cars in connection with the Mount Cook tourist traffic.

This matter had been raised by Mr W. Wreford, who said that he read that Sir W. Steward had been writing to the Government about a light railway from Fairlie to Tekapo. He thought it would be a great mistake to make such

a railway, as there was no traffic for one, except for the few months of the tourist season. The requirements would be equally well met by a motor car service to Pukaki, and the road could be made good for motor cars for a fraction of the cost of a railway to Tekapo. He said that at Home (meaning England), light railway schemes were being put aside, and motor cars used as feeders to the railways. If there was a motor car service to Pukaki, the trip to Mount Cook could be made in one day. The road could be made suitable for £15,000 or £20,000, whilst a railway would cost £150,000 to £200,000. Other members agreed with Mr Wreford. It was said that motor cars could not run beyond Pukaki, as the mountain torrents in the Tasman Valley were impassable for them. In May, correspondence was received from both Sir Joseph Ward and Sir William Steward, stating that a report would be obtained as to the cost of making the Fairlie-Pukaki road suitable for motor traffic.

In September 1905, an event took place which warranted reporting in the news media. Pukaki was visited by a motor car, Mr Wigley having some business to do in the Mackenzie country, and Mr R. L. Banks, the county engineer, having to inspect certain roads in that division of the county, they agreed to go together in Mr Wigley's car. Persons who were interested in motor car routes, and in Mount Cook tourist traffic, would be glad to hear that Mr Wigley reported that the road to Pukaki was fairly good for motor cars, and could easily be made "quite good enough". The chief requirements were a few bridges over small creeks, about half a dozen altogether. There was quite a lengthy description of the route taken, but one interesting feature was that when they ran into snow, "the tyres did not pick up the snow at all".

The matter is not mentioned again until 1st June 1906, when the council received a letter from the Colonial Secretary, stating that the Government would give consideration to the question of adopting a uniform by-law for motor car traffic for the whole colony. At the same time a letter was received from the Chief Engineer of Roads, Wellington, stating that the Government proposed erecting bridges for motor cars and coaches between Fairlie and Mount Cook, and asking the council to strengthen and widen the approach to the bridge over the Opihi at Bains, to allow motor car and coach traffic. It was agreed that the approach be widened for motor traffic.

### INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND CONSUMPTION

A subject which caused comment at the time was the Mackenzie council's attitude towards contributing to the building of an infectious diseases hospital in Timaru, and a hospital for consumptive cases in Christchurch. In both cases the response was negative. The first approach was a letter from the Hospital and Charitable Aid Board in May 1904, asking the council to appoint a delegate to attend a conference to consider the question of establishing an infectious diseases hospital. The chairman (Mr Gillingham) was appointed with power to use his own discretion in the matter. Apparently there was some confusion as to the nature of the hospital, as it appeared afterwards that it was to be a scarlet fever hospital. The council decided that as this was the case, and that means of transit of patients from the Mackenzie county would be both difficult and dangerous, they could not see their way to contribute

towards the cost of the erection. The Geraldine Road Board and the Temuka Borough Council also refused to co-operate. The Mackenzie county's levy would have been £97/13/1.

This warranted a lengthy report in the *Timaru Herald* headed, "Infectious Diseases Hospital — Mackenzie County Council refuses to contribute." The *Herald* did not seem to be enthusiastic about the proposal. Medical gentlemen, it said, like the District Health Officer, may be ready enough to take up their residence alongside a fever hospital, but the average citizen had too wholesome a respect for floating germs, to wish one planted next to his premises. Then, after lengthy comments, there was a final barb: "It certainly does not reflect much credit on the Health Department, but it will be interesting to watch how the autocratic and blundering body manages to get out of its muddle."

In January 1905, the Health Department called a further meeting of representatives to discuss the proposed hospital. Mr Gillingham attended and opposed the Mackenzie County being a contributing body. He did so on the grounds of distance from the hospital, and the difficulty of county residents making use of the institution. It was said that the question of contributions had now to be discussed afresh, and if no agreement was reached the proportions would have to be settled by the magistrate.

Then, on 3rd July, the council considered the question of contributing to a hospital for consumptives, and decided that the Government should deal with the matter on a colonial basis. Here again this warranted a newspaper report. The council opposed the move, and then discussed the question of whether, if they agreed to co-operate and to find £1000 towards the cost of a building and equipment, the money should be found by public subscription or by rate. The chairman preferred a levy on local bodies, so that everyone would pay according to his ability. Mr R. Guthrie said that he considered that dealing with consumption was one of the most important things the Government had to undertake, and it was a matter for the Government, not for local bodies to deal with in a patchwork fashion. Mr Wreford considered the Christchurch proposal worth considering on the score of economy.

In August, the Minister of Health, acknowledging the council's resolution, stated that the Government did not propose to do anything further in the meantime in the direction of establishing state hospitals.

#### CAVE RIDING'S SHORT EXISTENCE

On 5th January 1905, the council received a petition from forty-one rate-payers of the Albury Riding praying for the constitution of a new riding at the Cave end of the county. It was then proposed by Mr W. Wreford, and seconded by Mr R. Irving, that the Albury Riding of the Mackenzie County be divided into two, a detailed description of the new ridings being given, Cave to be represented on the council by one member, and the reduced Albury Riding by two members. The special order creating the ridings came into force on 1st April 1906.

Although the triennial elections had taken place the previous November, the Albury councillors just elected went out of office on 31st March. These were W. Wreford, R. Irving and D. Stewart. The fresh elections resulted in: Albury, R. Irving and D. Stewart; and Cave, William Tasman Smith. Thus ended Wm Wreford's ten years on the council.

The Cave Riding lasted until 4th November 1911, and during the whole period of its existence Mr W. Tasman Smith was its representative on the Mackenzie County Council. The previous May, the council decreed that the then division of the county into four ridings be revoked, and then proceeded to delineate three ridings only, Albury, Fairlie and Tekapo, each to have two members only in future, leaving the council's strength at six. The small receipts and expenditure shown in the estimates for the Cave Riding did not warrant its existence as a separate entity.

### CEMETERY COMMITTEES

In April 1905, Mr J. S. Rutherford drew attention to the unsatisfactory state of the Burkes Pass cemetery. He had attended a funeral there, and was ashamed of the state of the cemetery. Mr Guthrie reminded the council of a suggestion made at a previous meeting that small local committees be appointed to supervise the cemeteries. Working bees might be organised to put the cemeteries in good order. The money for maintenance would be voted by the council, which in itself would be the cemetery board.

Local meetings were held in the various centres, and local committees of management appointed. Mr R. Guthrie reported that a meeting of residents of Burkes Pass had been called with a view to putting the cemetery into a better condition than at present. Not many were present, as most of the residents were out on winter mustering. They appointed a committee of management to hold office for one year from 1st May: Mr R. Guthrie (chairman and secretary), Messrs John Anniss, John McGregor, John McMillan, Donald Ross, Walter Scott and George Keeffe.

The following month, Mr R. Irving reported that a cemetery management committee had been elected at Albury as follows: Mr J. S. Rutherford (chairman), Messrs R. Irving, Wm Wreford, James Austin, George T. Baker, D. Couper and M. O'Reilly; this committee to hold office till 1st June 1906. Mr Gillingham reported a similar meeting at Fairlie, the following committee of management being elected: Mr Gillingham (chairman-secretary), Messrs N. O'Toole, Joseph King, Thomas Foden, A. O. Gilmour, J. Caskey and John Trotter; this committee to hold office till 1st June 1906. The membership of these committees was subsequently reduced. They submitted annual reports to the council, were re-elected, and annual grants were made. These committees operated until 1941 when the council took over control, except in the case of Burkes Pass cemetery.

### OPUHA ROAD DISTRICT JOINS COUNTY

In November 1909, communications were received from the Mount Peel Road Board, and also the Geraldine County Council, concerning a petition for the transfer of the Raincliff district to the Mackenzie County. It was agreed to offer no objection, and to approve of the suggested boundaries. Mr James Hay advised that the severance could be made by Act of Parliament, or by first making Raincliff a separate road district. The latter course was followed. The first meeting of the Opuha Road Board was held on 10th May 1911. The members were Messrs R. A. Dixon (chairman), E. Macdonald, E. Harris and G. I. Hamilton. Mr R. L. Banks was elected clerk at a salary of £100



F. W. TESCHEMAKER  
Chairman Mount Cook Road Board  
1864-1867



J. McGREGOR  
Chairman Mackenzie County Council  
1883-1891 and 1893-1894



J. I. MILNE  
Chairman Mackenzie County Council  
1891-1893



E. RICHARDSON JNR.  
Chairman Mackenzie County Council  
1894-1896



F. R. GILLINGHAM  
Chairman Mackenzie County Council  
1896-1917



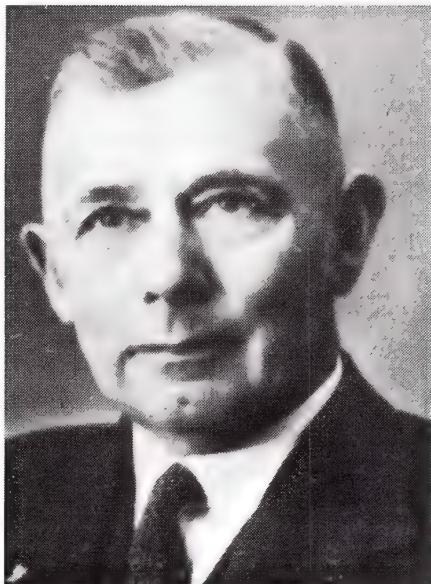
E. MACDONALD  
Chairman Mackenzie County Council  
1917-1923



C. J. TALBOT  
Chairman Mackenzie County Council  
1923-1933 and 1935-1937



G. MURRAY  
Chairman Mackenzie County Council  
1933-1935



W. R. DAVISON  
Chairman Mackenzie County Council  
1937-1939



W. SCOTT  
Chairman Mackenzie County Council  
1939-1942



C. V. KIRKE  
Chairman Mackenzie County Council  
1942-1959



W. B. TROTTER  
Chairman Mackenzie County Council  
1959-1961



K. GUY  
Chairman Mackenzie County Council  
1961-1965



H. W. FISHER  
Chairman Mackenzie County Council  
1965-1971



J. L. AUSTIN  
Chairman Mackenzie County Council  
1971-1974



M. G. H. MURRAY  
Chairman Mackenzie County Council  
1974-1977

per annum, and meetings were held in the Mackenzie County Council chambers. A rate of 7/16th of a penny in the £ was struck. Mr Banks was also described as the board's engineer.

As early as March 1911, it was decided that the Cave Riding should be done away with, and that when the Opuha Road District was included in the county it should be called the Opuha Riding, with two members on the council. On 1st March 1912, a special meeting of the Mackenzie County Council was called to pass a special order to merge the Opuha Road District into the county and to abolish the road board. Mr R. A. Dixon, the chairman, submitted the following scheme for the disposal of the board's funds, which his board considered fair and reasonable: (1) the freehold land, buildings, reserves and plantations in the Opuha Road District to be the property of the Mackenzie County as a whole; (2) the sum of £650 of the board's funds to be transferred to the council's general account, and the balance to the credit of the Opuha Riding; (3) the levy on the Opuha Riding at the end of the financial year to make good the deficiency in the general account to be based on the old valuation of the riding until such time as the Mackenzie County is revalued.

The council agreed to these terms. Mr Dixon then presented a petition signed by a majority of ratepayers of the Opuha Road District, possessing in the aggregate more than half the property therein, praying the council to abolish such district. The petition as advertised in the *Herald* showed sixty-four signatures. It was decided that the merger take place on or after 31st March 1912. Legal requirements were then proceeded with.

An election for two members representing the new Opuha Riding was held on 27th May, and this resulted in: Richard Arthur Dixon (who had been chairman of the road board), 63 votes; Ernest Macdonald, 59 votes; and Lewis John McGregor, 55 votes; the first two being elected, bringing the strength of the council up to eight councillors.

#### FAIRLIE DOMAIN BOARD

In October 1911, an order in council revoked an order dated 4th December 1893 delegating powers to the Mackenzie County Council as the Fairlie Domain Board, and appointed a new Fairlie Domain Board consisting of Joseph King, Thomas Foden, William Leslie Hosking, Charles John Talbot, John Eden Goodwin, Joseph Binney, Nicholas O'Toole, William Henry Anderson and John Caskey. The area of the domain was given as 29½ acres.

#### A NEW LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL

A statement made by Mr F. R. Gillingham in March 1912 on the subject of a new Local Government Bill must have caused some misgiving. He had been sent a copy of the Bill by Mr F. H. Smith, the member for Waitaki. Mr Gillingham said that for years they had been promised a new Local Government Bill, but so far as the Mackenzie council was concerned they were well enough off under the existing conditions. They had nothing particular to complain of. Years ago the late Mr Seddon brought forward a Local Government Bill of 500 clauses, but he merely circulated it. The present Bill contained 400-odd clauses, including a good deal of reprint of the present Act. Apparently it was intended to establish a Local Government Board who would

sit in Wellington and hold their meetings in private. "This would not be a very good thing." This board would comprise the Minister of Internal Affairs, the under-secretaries for Internal Affairs, Crown Lands and Public Works, and three others nominated by the Governor.

Then it was proposed to divide New Zealand into twenty-four districts, each to have a provincial council. These councils would take charge of the main roads, bridges, and water areas, while county councils would continue to have control of country roads, and other matters now within their jurisdiction. The provincial councils would be able to make special rating districts, and strike special rates. The present road boards would be abolished, as would also harbour boards, education boards, hospital and charitable aid boards, and river boards. Mr Gillingham pointed out that only two years previously the Government had passed a law giving direct representation to hospital and charitable aid boards, and on harbour boards, yet now the Government proposed to repeal it. To him this appeared to be absurd.

Mr Gillingham then said there would be a province for North Canterbury, and another for South Canterbury, probably sitting in Timaru. A curious thing was that Waitaki and South Canterbury had practically nothing in common. With respect to the qualification for voting, electors could be entered on the electoral roll, both for rating and residential qualifications, every elector having one vote for each qualification. Thus a man and his wife, holding a quarter-acre in town, would have four votes, while a man holding 10,000 acres in the country could not have more than half that number of votes.

Finally, he said that the new law would make it impossible for a local body to have overdrafts. It could not have an overdraft in excess of the revenue outstanding for the current year, which meant that an overdraft must not exceed the amount of rates outstanding, and this varied every month. Some councils worked regularly on an overdraft of £5000, but under the new bill local authorities would have to come out level at the end of each year. They were not asking for such reforms, and did not want them.

Note: The Ward Government went out of office at the end of that month, and when the Mackenzie Government also went out of office the following July the Liberal Party lost control of Parliament. The new Massey Government would not be interested in this attempt at local body government reform.

#### MACKENZIE VISITS MACKENZIE

The Hon. Thomas Mackenzie might have been Prime Minister for a short term of three and a half months, but during that time he apparently made a tour of at least part of the South Island. We know he visited Christchurch and Dunedin, and went to Waimate officially to set in motion the new clock and chimes on the post office tower, and to Timaru where he laid one of the foundation stones of the new Primitive Methodist Church on 3rd June 1912, which was the King's birthday.

Upon his arrival at Fairlie, the Prime Minister was met by a deputation consisting of the county chairman, Mr Gillingham, and the engineer, Mr Banks. Four matters in particular were brought to the notice of the Prime Minister, who was accompanied by the Hon. Thomas Buxton, member for Temuka. The first matter was in regard to improved access to three runs in the Tekapo Riding. One of these was The Grampians, while the other two were on Haldon.

Access to the runs was very bad, and it was thought the road should be improved to give better access. At that time there was practically no outlet, and it was hardly fair that the Tekapo ratepayers should have to pay to provide the necessary access. What was required was a grant of £600 or £700 to have the road put into proper repair. The second was the question of a lease of a small section of land in connection with the Tekapo Hotel. What the council required was to have a small section of land surrounding the hotel endowed to them, and they would lease it together with the hotel. The lease of the present hotel had fallen through, and until it was known what the Government intended to do, no action could be taken. Mr Buxton pointed out that the land was wanted for an accommodation house. Mr Gillingham said the council was prepared to pay rent for it.

A plea was then made on behalf of the leaseholders of small pastoral runs within the county. At present the ratepayers had to construct all the roads through the new country, and the county council thought it would be possible to give the tenants of these small pastoral runs the option of making them small grazing runs, with right of renewal. The Prime Minister said he did not think the request could be considered by the Government. It was only a few months since the system had been in operation, and it should be given a trial. The Government was opening up land all over the Dominion, and now people were actually living on increased rent by sub-letting to other people. Taranaki was the most glaring instance of this. People were sub-letting for other purposes, and in some parts of New Zealand land was sub-let to two or three tenants while the original landlord sat behind and did nothing.

Mr Gillingham then asked for a grant to repair the Hermitage road (through Silverstream). The road had been badly cut up through cartage of material to the Hermitage, and it was not quite fair that the ratepayers should have to pay £600 or £700 to have it repaired. The Prime Minister said he would obtain all the necessary information on the matter before coming to a decision. As he went out of office in July, he hardly had a chance to do so.

#### NEW COUNCIL CHAMBERS

For many years the council had been content to conduct its business in a room in a dwelling house. With the advent of closer settlement, Fairlie became more and more important, and what was good enough in days gone by was now quite inadequate to uphold its dignity. Thus it was that in April 1912 it was decided to invite Timaru architects to submit competitive plans, the council agreeing to pay one guinea for each plan, but to be free from liability in regard to accepting the best design, the architect sending in the plan chosen to carry out the work. Five plans were received. A petition asked that the proposed new county buildings be erected on the library corner, but the council decided that they should be on the site of the then present offices. No time was lost in calling tenders, and in August, from six tenders, on the advice of Messrs Hall and Marchant, architects, of Timaru, that of Charles Calvert for £1495 was accepted.

The council invited the Prime Minister, the Hon. W. F. Massey, to perform the opening ceremony and give an address, and, failing him, the Hon. R. H. Rhodes was to be asked to come down for the purpose. The chairmen of adjoining local bodies, and ex-members of the council, were invited.

#### OFFICIAL OPENING

The new offices were officially opened on Friday, 2nd May 1913, by the Hon. W. H. Herries. The minister arrived shortly after noon, accompanied by Messrs J. Craigie, F. H. Smith and W. Nosworthy, members of Parliament, and Mr Moore of the Timaru branch of the Reform League. Mr Craigie, representing Mr Buxton, member for the district, who was overseas, introduced the minister to the councillors and public assembled. Mr Gillingham gave Mr Herries a cordial welcome to Fairlie, supplied some information about the new offices which had cost about £1560, handed Mr Herries a golden key, a gift from the contractors as a memento of the occasion, and requested him to declare the building open for public use. Mr Herries congratulated the architect on the new offices, praising the external appearance as a model for such an office. They were more than credible too, inasmuch as they had been built without the State being asked to contribute to their cost. He then unlocked the door with the golden key, and declared the new chambers open.

The new building was described as a very neat structure of bricks, with white facings, and a noteworthy addition to the architectural features of the township. The site was next to Mr Wigley's motor garage in the main street. The design was described as Georgian style, with a handsome Oamaru stone entrance and four-light semi-circular windows on each side, with steel casement in Oamaru stone, jambs, mullion and transom. Internally the building was divided into an entrance hall, board room, engineer's office, a public office, a ferro-concrete strongroom, a waiting room, lavatory and stationery departments. The whole of the ceilings were of Wunderlich steel, and the offices well lit by acetylene gas.

The architects were Hall and Marchant, of Timaru; the builder, C. Calvert of Christchurch; the stonemason, Mr Diehl, also of Christchurch; plumbers, Messrs Philip and Roy, Timaru; painters and glaziers, Messrs Surridge and Bolter, Fairlie. The council first met in the new chambers on 6th June 1913.

#### A CARNEGIE LIBRARY FOR FAIRLIE

The name of Andrew Carnegie, the Scottish-born American iron and steel works magnate, is perhaps only vaguely remembered these days, but his gifts of free libraries all over the world made his name famous earlier this century. In April 1913, Mr James Bertram, secretary to the Carnegie Corporation of New York, replying to an enquiry from the county clerk, said the corporation would be glad to give £1000 to the county provided the Fairlie, Tekapo and Opuha ridings pledged themselves officially to provide from taxation £100 per annum for the upkeep of the library, and also provided a site for the building, the cost of which would not be a burden on the revenue, specified. It was decided that the amount of £100 be divided among the ridings: Fairlie £50, Opuha £30, and Tekapo £20. Mr Burnett voted against the motion, being of the opinion that Tekapo's share should not exceed £10. Messrs Smith and Irving, the Albury members, did not vote as their riding was not an interested party.

The amount of £1000 was to cover the cost of the library building, complete, ready for occupancy, and for the purpose intended. Before any expenditure was incurred, the approval of plans by the corporation should be secured, and Mr Bertram asked for sketch plans for inspection. In August the

corporation asked for amended plans. The plan sent was not a practical one, the building being cut up into small unimportant rooms with altogether too much space being taken up by lobbies. By adopting a building with proportions approximately as seven is to three, it was possible to obtain a square room of substantial size on either side of the entrance, the whole interior being made by book shelves which could be shifted as experience dictated. The council agreed to alter the plan.

In January 1914, the Carnegie Corporation advised that the plans had been approved, and the £1000 would be paid over as the work progressed. The architects, Hall and Marchant, were asked to call tenders for the work. The building was to be of brick, with tiled roof, and the reading room 34ft by 20ft. A caretaker's room was provided, with the reading room in full view, and a residence on the top flat. A short article in the *Timaru Herald* said that although there were some people who objected "on principle" to taking Mr Carnegie's money, it seemed an excellent principle to accept money freely given for a good cause.

The lowest tender was accepted, that of P. Foster of Timaru, for £890. In June a library committee comprising the chairman, and Messrs W. J. Grant, E. Macdonald and the county engineer was appointed. "It is entirely due to Mr Banks that there is a public library in Fairlie," said the chairman. "He would not take no for an answer, but battled away until he got the money from Mr Carnegie. Thanks were due solely to Mr Banks."

#### ROCKY GULLY BRIDGE

On 27th November 1907, Sir William Steward advised that a vote of £550, £ for £, was made for the Rocky Gully bridge, on the main road below Albury. It was decided to apply for a loan of a similar amount under The Local Bodies Loans Act 1901, for a term of thirty-three years at 4%, the whole county to be a special rating district.

In January arrangements were made for public meetings in all four ridings (Cave was a riding then), to explain the proposal prior to a poll being taken. Meanwhile the Railways Department had approved of the site of the bridge, and of a deviation of the road alongside the railway line. The poll resulted in 111 in favour and 7 against, 1 informal.

In August a tender of W. H. Tubb for £799/3/4 was accepted, but nine months were allowed for the erection of the bridge because of the difficulty of getting ironbark. Had this concession not been made, there would have been no tenders.

#### TRAFFIC BRIDGE OVER PAREORA RIVER

On 6th January 1911, letters were received from the Waimate County Council and Mr C. H. Verity on the subject of a proposed bridge over the Pareora River. The chairman said that he and Mr W. T. Smith, and the engineer, had met the Waimate County Council regarding the bridge site. He was of the opinion that the bridge should be erected at the lower site, known as "Martins Crossing", as being the best for Mackenzie County rate-payers. It was decided to take no action meantime.

In October 1912, the Waimate County Council said they would erect a traffic bridge at "Martins Crossing" conditionally on the Government

providing a grant for £1000 for the work, and the Levels and Mackenzie county councils providing each one-third of the balance. The council was asked by the county to increase an already promised contribution of £250 to £300, but this was rejected by three votes to two.

The Waimate County Council tried again on 7th November 1913, with the same proposition as before, that Levels and Mackenzie counties each contribute one-third of the cost and future maintenance of approaches and protective works. The chairman said it was out of all reason to expect them to pay one-third of the cost of upkeep of the bridge. He could not see much benefit, as there was a good traffic bridge a mile or two further up. There was nothing in the letter asking them to support the proposition to the Government. The letter was received.

#### SALE OF LAKE TEKAPO HOTEL

When tenders were opened on 4th April 1913 for the lease of the Tekapo Hotel, the Mount Cook Motor Company Ltd, which offered £90 per annum, though not the highest offer, stated that should they obtain a lease they proposed to spend something like £3000 on the property in improvements. After some discussion, Mr Anniss was asked by telephone if he would be prepared to spend £2000 in improvements during the first two years. To this enquiry he replied in the negative.

It was then decided to offer the Mount Cook Motor Co. a lease for twenty-one years with a right of renewal for fourteen years (at a revaluation of the rental) at a rental of £120 per annum, conditionally on the lease reverting to the council should the motor company fail to spend £1000 on improvements in the first year, and a further £1000 on improvements during the second year of the lease, the motor company to have the option of purchasing the property at any time during the first year of the lease for £1200. In the event of the motor company declining the offer, it was decided to sell the lease by auction. Mr W. J. Grant and Mr T. D. Burnett objected to the option to purchase.

The Mount Cook Motor Co. accepted these terms, and then asked the council if it would sell the hotel for a cash payment of £600, with the balance in twelve months at 6% interest. The council agreed, Messrs Grant and Burnett voting against the acceptance. The news media then published a lengthy article on the Mount Cook Motor Company's plans to improve Lake Tekapo as a future holiday resort.

#### FAIRLIE FIRE STATION

The earliest attempt to form a fire brigade in Fairlie was in 1906, when a fire broke out in Mrs Watts' grocery shop. After the fire Dr S. J. Cook and Mr J. King convened a meeting, and a bucket brigade was formed. Several serious fires occurred in the next two years, one at the railway station, when a good save of railway carriages was made. Another in the business block destroyed a gymnasium and the library.

On 6th March 1908, a deputation consisting of Messrs T. Foden, J. Caskey, C. Pilkington and J. Goodwin waited on the council and asked for assistance in establishing a fire brigade, in the form of a money grant, and a site and shed for the engine. It was decided that the clerk obtain an opinion from the solicitors to the Counties Association as to whether it was lawful to constitute

a special works rating district over the area to be benefitted. It was then decided that Lot 3 of the council's land on R.S. 20810 (or Lot 2 in the event of its not bringing the upset price at auction), be reserved for a fire brigade station, and that one of the council's sheds be set aside and shifted on to the allotment set aside for the purpose. Note: This section would be one of five lots, one acre in all, with a long frontage on Allandale Road, being offered for sale by public auction at the time.

In October it was decided to advance £175 to the fire brigade committee, provided the necessary steps in connection with the special works rate were taken first, and that the brigade appliances were vested in the council. In November a special works rate of 5/16th of a penny in the £ was levied on the Fairlie Township Special Works District, the extent of which was defined in the resolution.

The engine, purchased in England, was described as a 16-manual engine with 500 feet of 2½in hose, and would cost about £143 landed in Fairlie. For £86 they could get a chemical engine, and £110 would purchase a second-hand engine from Napier. Mr Hugo, superintendent of fire brigades, had visited Fairlie. He advised them to get a new engine, and also get a knapsack pump, costing about £4, for use at fires before the engine arrived on the scene. The cost of a bell was defrayed by public subscription.

In March 1914, a tender of £115 from P. Foster and Son for the erection of a fire brigade station was accepted. An official opening took place on Friday evening, 26th June. Before opening the doors, Mr Gillingham addressed a meeting of the public outside the building. The key was then handed to him by Captain W. Close, the bell was rung, and sky rockets were sent up. After the opening, the brigade, together with the leading businessmen of the town, Mr E. Millichamp (representing the contractors), Mr R. L. Banks (county engineer), Mr Joseph Binney (representing the Domain Board), and several others sat down to a very dainty banquet laid out in the new station. After the usual round of speeches, a vote of thanks was passed to the fire brigade for a very pleasant evening, and "Auld Lang Syne" was sung.

#### JOHN SCOTT RUTHERFORD

A name that must for ever be associated with the Mount Cook Road Board and the Mackenzie County Council is that of John Scott Rutherford who gave in all forty-three years local body service. He served on the road board from 1872 to 1875 and from 1878 to 1883, a total of eight years on that body, and then another twenty-two years on the county council, from its inception in 1883 to 1887 and from 1893 to 1911, representing variously Fairlie, Albury and Tekapo ridings. From 1911 until his death in 1924 he represented the Mackenzie County on the Timaru Harbour Board.

He was born in Victoria in 1846, and then came to New Zealand with his parents in 1860. Together with his brother Robert, he took up Opawa Station in 1870, and in 1887 he bought "The Mistake" station. He was chairman of the Albury Saleyards Company, and twice president of the South Canterbury Agricultural and Pastoral Association. It is said that his four-in-hand tandem ponies always attracted much attention. It is recorded that he drove Lord and Lady Onslow and family through the Mackenzie country, from Burkes Pass to the Hermitage, on through Central Otago and then to Invercargill.

The first coach to reach the Hermitage was a six-in-hand driven by Mr Rutherford. He was a member of the private company operating the coaching service, and the first owner of the Albury Coal Mine. He also devoted considerable time to educational matters, and as a member of the South Canterbury Education Board had done good work in the interests of country education. His brother, Robert Rutherford, also served on both the Mount Cook Road Board and the Mackenzie County Council.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1904

##### TEKAPO ISLAND

The Commissioner of Crown Lands advised that the proposed exchange of land in Tekapo Island for a reserve in the Richmond Reserve could only be made on the basis of acre for acre. Agreed that the Government be asked to purchase the land on the island at Mr Schlaepfer's price of £2 an acre, Mr Schlaepfer having refused to the exchange of acre for acre.

##### PUNAROA SETTLEMENT

A letter from five settlers on Punaroa settlement asked for the construction of a water race to supply water to the sections below Silverstream fronting on the main road, and agreeing to pay the usual charges as levied in the water district. Agreed subject to the approval of the Land Board.

##### MR M. FITZGERALD

On 8th August, Mr Fitzgerald intimated that he had sold his stock of trees, understanding that the Forestry Department would in future supply the council with its needs. He was giving up tree planting owing to ill health, and thanked the council for their treatment of him over the years. A motion of regret for Mr Fitzgerald's illness was passed. He had been supplying trees almost since the inception of the council in 1883.

##### MA WARO POST OFFICE

The Chief Postmaster of Timaru requested a name for the new post office at Coal Creek, suggesting Ma Waro as being the Maori for Coal Creek. This was agreed to.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1906

##### HALF-HOLIDAY

In terms of The Shop and Offices Act 1904, the council fixed the afternoon of Thursday as the statutory half-holiday in the Mackenzie County.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1907

##### TELEPHONE TO ASHWICK FLAT

The Telegraph Department stated that the erection of a telephone line to Ashwick Flat could not be entertained owing to the cost and small estimated revenue. It was decided that the clerk write again on the matter. The council was later advised that the telephone line would be run to Ashwick Flat School with an office at "Langridges" on payment of a guarantee of £15 per annum for five years. It was agreed that if the settlers interested signed guarantees for the amount required, the council would sign the necessary bond to allow the work to proceed.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1909

### GIFT OF LAND

Dr S. J. Cook, on behalf of the Misses McLean, asked the council to accept the trusteeship of a piece of land given by them to the district for recreation purposes. They wished the council to act as trustees, so that no trouble may arise in the future as regards to trustees. Dr Cook explained the trust deed, and said that an auditor would be appointed by those residing in the school district, who would see that the ground given was being properly managed. The land adjoined the Athletic Grounds, being situated just below. It is stated in the minutes to contain five acres, but a news report says seven acres. The land was accepted and the Misses McLean thanked for their generosity.

### FAIRLIE STREETS

In August the streets of Fairlie were transferred to the Crown.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1910

### GOVERNOR'S VISIT TO FAIRLIE

It must have been a low-key affair when the Governor, Lord Plunkett, visited Fairlie on 25th March 1910, and remained until the following day when he went to Waimate. The chairman, Mr Gillingham, reported to the council that he had received and entertained the Governor, and a news report says the chairman paid the expenses out of his own pocket.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1911

### ASPHALT FOOTPATHS

It was agreed that footpaths in Fairlie township with concrete kerbing be asphalted if the section owners pay half the cost, the council's share to be charged to the Fairlie Riding account.

### CAVE LIBRARY

The Cave Library committee asked for a grant in aid of the Cave Library. They were asked to renew their application when the building was erected.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1912

### WIDENING BRIDGES

Two light traffic bridges in the Opuha Riding were widened to allow for motor traffic, and a stock bridge at McAuley's in the Albury Riding was widened to allow for light traffic.

### PEACE ?

A letter was received from the National Peace Council, Christchurch, asking the council's support in protesting against compulsory clauses in the Defence Act. Ordered to be put in the waste paper basket.

### 999-YEAR LEASE

The Lands Department declined to make a grant towards the cost of protective works on rivers adjoining the Punaroa and Albury settlements on the grounds that as the leases were for 999 years, practically freehold, the settlers should themselves bear the cost of the work. The department would assist in making the necessary surveys and estimates, and by giving advice. The letter was received.

#### LOYALTY TO THE KING

The Waihi Borough Council asked the council to make it a condition that all employees be required to affirm their loyalty to the King. It was agreed to affirm the principle of the borough's resolution, but to take no action in the matter. The chairman remarked that the more conditions there were imposed, the harder it would be to get men.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1913

##### TEKAPO RIDING TELEPHONES

A loan of £1200 was received from the Public Trust Office for the erection and maintaining of telephones in the Tekapo Riding. On 5th September, a Mackenzie Telephone Special Rating Area was constituted, and a special rate of 1d in the £ levied for twelve years. The loan was to connect the properties of certain ratepayers who had petitioned for the loan, with the Government telephone offices or exchanges at Balmoral or Burkes Pass. (Burkes Pass was opened in 1891 and Balmoral in 1907.)

# 6

## The War Years and After, 1914-1923

### A SUMMARY OF RECENT PROGRESS

It seems appropriate that just before the triennial election of 1914, and so soon after the outbreak of the First World War, that the chairman, Mr F. R. Gillingham, should sum up the progress made during the previous three years. It seems impressive.

During that time, the council had built eighteen light traffic bridges, and reconstructed seven. In the way of buildings, they had erected their new council chambers, which was a very satisfactory job, and no extra charge on the rates. The sale of the Tekapo Hotel had gone through. A grant from the Carnegie Corporation had been obtained for the library which was now built, and was an acquisition to the town. A new fodder shed had proved a very useful investment. The new fire brigade station had been opened, and was also a very necessary and well appointed building.

New plant to the amount of £708 had been purchased, which included horses, graders, etc. Under the heading of general works, they had the final adjustment of the finances of the Opuha Riding, the Tekapo telephone financing, and several by-law arrangements, while they were instrumental in gaining substantial Government grants for road purposes at Ashwick, Sherwood Downs, and Mount Nessing settlements. A very useful by-law was enacted, limiting heavy traffic in Tekapo in the winter months.

A large amount of timber had been cut for the use of settlers. The council had purchased 140,000 forest trees for distribution, and had laid off about 200 miles of Tekapo roads. They had received and expended during the three years of office, £6750 in Government grants for road works. The expenditure for the first year was £8500, the second £14,650, and the last year £14,420, so that they had not been idle. The total amount of money expended during the three years was £35,000, and the only charge of mal-administration he could hear of was £15 for entertaining their Members of Parliament and a Minister of the Crown.

The council had thirty-nine meetings, of which the chairman had attended thirty-eight, more than anyone else. The three past years had been the most smoothly conducted and agreeable during the twenty-eight years he had been a member of the council. Mr Gillingham expressed appreciation of the work of the gangs — the men were very good and conscientious workers. Of the engineer he could not speak too highly. Everyone knew the value of Mr Banks' work, and words from him were quite superfluous.

LET US RELAX AWHILE  
*A little nonsense now and then  
Is relished by the wisest men.*  
— Anon.

The Mackenzie County Council received a letter asking its opinion as to whether rooks should be added to the list of injurious birds. The council decided that the matter did not concern it, Mr F. H. Buckley adding that they had some rooks without feathers in the community, but unfortunately they were unable to get rid of them.

"This is the most inconsistent body that I have ever come across," said Mr Tasman Smith at a council meeting — and he was a member of the body referred to.

Mr Schlaepfer gives the telephone a good name. He, a snow-bound Mackenzie runholder, told the council that the telephone at Tekapo had been invaluable during the snow. He would rather see roads neglected than lose the telephone.

"The farmers are a very self-opionated class," said Mr Burnett. The chairman said that might be, but they could not look after themselves as well as the runholders.

Hearty laughter was provoked when a tenderer, an ex-member of the council, and known as the silent councillor at the time, submitted a tender for 30/- with a footnote, "If this is the only tender in, I will reduce my tender to one pound."

A county clerk is expected to be a man of many parts. In response to a demand for overdue rates, a ratepayer tendered him a short-horned bull for sale, asking that the rates should be deducted from the proceeds. None of the councillors present at the meeting offered to assist him. He said he was anxious to have a prospective buyer in view before the ratepayer made delivery.

"We have one grape vine and one plum tree," said the county engineer when the Department of Agriculture forwarded a certificate of registration of the council's orchard. It was suggested that the department might drop such nonsense in wartime.

To prevent excessive speed on country roads, a suggestion that dips or hollows be purposely made at intervals on the road was made by Mr G. Murray. "Ugh!" shuddered one of the councillors — the owner of a motor car — with manifest alarm at the idea.

Referring to the carelessness of some motorists who met with accidents on public roads, Mr J. McCort raised a hearty laugh when he said that the trouble with some drivers was that they put the petrol in the wrong tank.

The unstable condition of a couple of small bridges were referred to at a meeting of the council. One member said it was as good as going to a dentist to go over one of them. "It fairly shakes one's teeth out."

"Does the ranger get a bonus for collecting the dog tax?" asked Mr J. McCort. "It is part of his duty," said the chairman. Mr McCort: "He is a very diligent man then, for I can't keep a dog without registering."

### PROPOSED GAS COMPANY

On 1st August 1913, the chairman stated that there had been a proposal to establish an Aerogene Gas Company in Fairlie, and the promoters asked on what terms the council would allow them to start operations. The clerk then furnished a report in which he recommended that the council should sell the plant and rights for £250, provided that the Aerogene Gas Company does not charge consumers more than 10/- per 1000 feet of gas, the right to be for a term of twenty-one years, and the council or any other local body at Fairlie to have the right of purchase at any time at valuation of plant and goodwill, and further, that the existing street lamps should be supplied at not more than 30/- each per annum, lighting and extinguishing to be done by the council.

The council recognised that it had too much to do to bother much about the extension of the public gas supply, and with the idea of not standing in the way of progress, adopted the clerk's recommendations. The proposition was not proceeded with, and, looking back, it is just as well that it was not. Possibly Mr Banks' caution that under no circumstances were the ratepayers to pay more for their gas under private enterprise put an end to the scheme.

### CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

When compulsory military training was introduced into New Zealand in 1909, apparently there was no ripple of any sort in the Mackenzie County. Things were different, however, when, in April 1914, a letter was received from the Minister of Defence (Hon. James Allen) referring to the defence system. Obviously the council had no sympathy with conscientious objectors, but unfortunately debated it in a somewhat facetious mood, which drew comments from both Timaru newspapers.

The Minister asked the council's views as to the most suitable work to be provided for those exempted from military service on religious or conscientious grounds. In justice to those who performed their obligations in accordance with the Act, it was felt that some equivalent service of a non-military nature should be exacted from those who, for "conscientious" reasons, could not see their way to carry out their statutory military obligations. It was considered that some work of use to the community could be found for such. There were only sixty-nine exempted on religious grounds, but when exemptions were extended to the "conscientious" objectors, there might be an increase.

Mr T. D. Burnett: What are conscientious objectors?

The chairman: Oh, crawlers, I think.

Mr R. Leitch: All should be made to serve.

The chairman: I notice this was turned down by the Levels County Council, but I think it is our duty to help the department, who are endeavouring to do their best in connection with the defence of our country. If there was to be supervision it might be inconvenient to local bodies.

Mr W. T. Smith: The chairman might be compelled to undertake that.

The chairman: I suggest giving them so many yards of stone cracking and

paying them so much for it. There would be no supervision needed under that scheme, and the workers would be paid by results. They might be given firewood cutting by the cord.

Mr L. J. McGregor: Send them to the Strathallan to break stones. It's good metal too.

Mr Leitch: Give them gorse cutting.

The chairman: That's a very good suggestion, and it's good enough for them.

Mr R. Irving: There is plenty of gorse grubbing that could be done.

Mr E. Macdonald: The best way would be for the county engineer to measure out a certain quantity of work, meriting the total payment, and leave it to the "objectors" to finish the work. When the work was finished, they could go, and if it was not done, they should be apprehended and brought back.

Mr Smith: I wou'd like to see them compelled to do military training.

Mr Irving: They could be sent out to do tree planting.

The chairman: I think the conscience of many of them would harden if they saw stone-breaking looming up in front of them. (Laughter.) We will find work and see that they do it. We wish to back up the department.

Mr Smith: I think all local bodies should have supported this.

Mr Macdonald: I hope the council will keep in mind the claims of the Little Valley road if stone cracking is to be done. (Laughter.)

Mr Banks: That might be rather soft stone.

Mr Burnett: Fork River Flat would suit them better. (Laughter.)

The secretary was instructed to write to the department along the lines of the discussion, suggesting stone-breaking, and assuring the department of the council's support in connection with the scheme.

This debate provoked two different responses from the *Timaru Herald* and the *Timaru Post*. The *Herald* said that the Mackenzie County Council clearly had not much sympathy with conscientious objectors, but treated Mr Allen's request in something like a facetious mood, and wished they had discussed the matter in a more serious spirit.

The *Timaru Post* said the opposite. In a leader it congratulated the council on its reception of the suggestion put forward by the Minister of Defence. It pointed out that the South Invercargill Borough Council received the letter without even reading it through, the Petone Borough Council received it with the comment that the Minister apparently wished the council to set up a military prison, and that the Levels County Council merely received the letter, probably because they were too busy with other matters. The leader concluded, "If all the local bodies will take the same view of their duty, and accord the same consideration to the Minister's proposal as the Mackenzie council has done, the department will experience little difficulty in solving one of the most trying problems that have confronted it."

Naturally Mr Gillingham replied to press criticism, stating that, while it was true that some councillors had indulged in certain facetious remarks at the expense of the so-called conscientious objectors, they were quite sincere in their unanimous opinion that local bodies should assist the Defence Department as much as possible in the direction indicated by the circular letter sent out by the authorities. He appended the full text of the letter sent by the county clerk to the Minister of Defence.

## WARTIME CONSCRIPTION

*And when the legions marched away  
To dye with blood the distant loam,  
He bravely cheered them on their way,  
He waved a flag — and stayed at home.*

— The Patriot (H. E. Holland)

If the Mackenzie County Council drew adverse criticism over its attitude to those exempt from military training, its positive hostile reception of a Recruiting Board's circular produced a negative reaction from both the press and among the public. On 2nd March 1916, just a couple of months before conscription was introduced during the First World War, the council, at the conclusion of their business meeting, discussed the Recruiting Board's circular asking for the co-operation of the council in connection with the Government's new recruiting scheme. Present with the council was the Rev. O. Hanby, chairman of the committee for the welfare and reception of soldiers.

The Recruiting Board asked for the assistance of the council in a thorough canvass of the county for recruits, and forwarded rolls of eligibles, and other papers in connection with the scheme. A telegram was also received from the Recruiting Board in which it was suggested, among other things, that ladies should be asked to assist in the canvassing.

Mr T. D. Burnett: For goodness sake keep the women out of it!

The chairman thought the council should support the scheme. Possibly conscription was the best thing, but the Government were trying out the voluntary system, which was thought to be the best in the meantime, and it was the duty of people to support the system until it had had a fair trial.

Mr W. T. Smith said the council should turn the Government's scheme down and ask them to bring in conscription straight away. The present scheme was only playing with the matter. Mr E. Macdonald said he was a conscriptionist straight out, and while the voluntary system was in vogue he did not consider that they would be justified in asking men why they did not go to war. Mr Burnett said he was not prepared to put the question to any man. It was on all fours with a man going round with a spiritual mission, and asking people why they were not communicants, when he himself was not one. Mr Smith then proposed that the scheme be turned down. In the course of discussion the chairman said there were five members of the council who were of military age.

The Rev. Mr Hanby, in a lengthy address, said that conscription was the proper thing, and that there would be great difficulty in eligible men asking others to go to the war. The upshot of the discussion was the passing of an amendment, "That this council do not see their way to support the present scheme of recruiting, and urges the Government to adopt compulsory service at once." Messrs Macdonald, Smith and Burnett voted in favour, and the chairman and Mr Irving against. Mr Grant did not vote, explaining that he did not approve of turning the Government scheme down.

The reaction was rapid. The *Timaru Post*, heading a leading article "A Blunder", said that it seemed to them that the members of the Mackenzie County Council had made a very serious blunder in passing a resolution that was hostile to the Recruiting Board's scheme, but that they had acted so

frankly and openly that their case called for pity rather than anger. A lengthy article in the *Herald* concluded: "The Fairlie [sic] County Council should reverse its ill-considered motion at a special meeting, or if that is not practicable, a Recruiting Board should be established independent of the council."

A special meeting was called on a petition of eighty-five signatures asking for such a meeting to be called. There was a lengthy debate, but the final resolution was "That the council will fall in with the views of the Government in regard to its recruiting scheme, but at the same time would express its strong opinion that the only method by which the necessary number of recruits will be obtained, without interfering with labour necessary for the productive work of the country, is by compulsory service." It was then decided unanimously that the Government should be requested to appoint discharged soldiers who reside in the Mackenzie County to carry out the duties of recruiting agents.

In April, Lance Corporal Buckley of Pusey, a returned soldier, was employed to canvass the county for recruits at a remuneration of 30/- per week expenses, in addition to army rates of pay. He was also provided with a motor bicycle hired at £10 a month. There was also a letter from the Rt Hon. W. F. Massey, the Prime Minister, thanking the council for their resolution at the special meeting agreeing to assist with the recruiting scheme.

### THE FIRST WORLD WAR EFFORT

*Right nobly well did they respond,  
The men who wore the hob-nailed boots;  
From far and near, back of beyond,  
They flocked in crowds, the raw recruits.*

— The Patriot (H. E. Holland)

War was declared on Germany on 4th August 1914, and it was not long before every New Zealander felt its impact in some form or other. The Mackenzie County Council carried on with its normal business, interspersed with its response to the war situation, and a sickening series of resolutions of sympathy to relatives of those killed in action.

A mere three days after the war broke out, the council "most heartily" endorsed the action of the Government in any steps they may consider necessary to take in the present crisis in the Empire's history. In September came a spate of suggestions. The Minister of Defence forwarded particulars of the several lists of Defence Fund subscriptions established by the Government. Mr W. T. Smith thought it would be far better for the Government to levy a war tax to cover all these funds, and the council unanimously supported a proposal that local authorities should be able to devote one-twentieth of their revenue to purchase food supplies for the Home Government.

The chairman attended a conference to consider Canterbury local bodies raising £15,000 a month for the Belgium Relief Fund. This later became the British and Belgium Relief Fund, the council's share of contribution working out at £23/6/3 a month. It was agreed to pay this amount. £25 was also given to the Fairlie Red Cross. The council also supported a suggestion by the Taumarunui Patriotic Committee that raffles on a large scale should be allowed during the war.

In November 1915, Mr J. A. Fraser, the junior clerk, applied for leave of absence to go to war. This was granted, his position to remain open for him on his return. Among numerous letters and suggestions received was one from the Petone Borough Council advocating that pensions be paid irrespective of the financial circumstances of the several men. In July 1916, the navy is mentioned for the first time. The mayor of Timaru (Mr E. R. Guinness) convened a meeting of local bodies concerning Navy Relief. The chairman attended the meeting and agreed to endeavour to raise £5000 for the relief of navy dependents.

Ultra-patriotism was not received with enthusiasm. The Hawkes Bay Anti-German League asked the council to support a proposal that no naturalised British subject of enemy origin be allowed to take part in any public matter in the Dominion. The letter was merely received, and it was decided to do nothing about the matter.

An interesting side issue which shows that the Mackenzie County did all that was required in the war effort was revealed in a letter from the Recruiting Board, forwarding a list of balloted men who had failed to report, and asking the council to afford assistance in discovering their whereabouts. Only two men from the Mackenzie County were on the list, and these were unknown. In March 1918, the council supported the Prime Minister (the Rt Hon. W. F. Massey) in his drive to have the former German colonies in the Pacific retained by the Empire.

In September the Red Cross, Timaru, applied for assistance for their special appeal, but this was not received too kindly. The chairman stated that the residents of the county were circularised, and they forwarded their subscriptions to Timaru, which was accredited with the amount, to the detriment of the Mackenzie County. It was decided to give the council's old car for the purpose of raffling for the fund, the amount of proceeds to be deducted from the council's annual donation. At the same meeting it was decided to give £10 to the Fairlie Christmas parcels fund.

Armistice Day was 11th November 1918. At the December meeting a resolution was passed, "That this council as a means of commemorating Peace from the great war, plant an avenue of deciduous trees on both sides of the road, trees to be ten chains apart, or closer if possible, the planting to commence at Silverstream and to extend five miles or more towards Cricklewood. Application to be made to the Government for assistance from the Mackenzie Planting funds, and private donations to be solicited."

#### CAPTAIN NORMAN MARCHANT

Expressions of sympathy had been passed with monotonous regularity, but one in particular should be mentioned. In January 1917, the chairman made sympathetic reference to the death in action in Egypt of Captain Norman Marchant, son of Mr F. W. Marchant, who was the first engineer of the county. Captain Marchant had been associated with Fairlie in various ways. He and his partner (Mr Hall) had designed the council's new chambers, and also the Carnegie Library. Then, on his own account, as a labour of love, he planned the Anglican Parish Hall and the Fairlie Fire Brigade Station. A vote of sympathy to Captain Marchant's relatives was carried in silence, all members standing.

## NATIONAL EFFICIENCY

The Mackenzie County Council can never be accused of being slow to question the decisions of higher authority, and on more than one occasion has been criticised for doing so. At a meeting of the council on 4th April 1917, a discussion took place on the question of national efficiency, and the management of soldiers' farms. This arose out of a letter received from the National Efficiency Board, asking that labour be economised, and a committee appointed for the management of soldiers' farms in the county.

Mr T. D. Burnett's reaction was that it looked as though a number of boards and trusts were going to be set up, but no practical work done. The chairman (Mr Gillingham) said it was impossible to maintain efficient production if they had also to meet the full demands of the military. It seemed to be all enquiry and advice: what was wanted was men to work.

Mr W. T. Smith said there seemed to be no proper head to the Government's scheme. The Government should conscript all men from eighteen to sixty years of age; if they did this there would be plenty of labour to double the present production. The present system of sending one man to war, and leaving another at home to reap the benefit of his absence, was altogether unfair. A man who was not fit to go to war should be compelled to work at home.

Mr Burnett: Are you prepared to conscript wealth?

Mr Smith: It is being conscripted now through taxation.

Mr Burnett said that everything would right itself, if only they could get a changed spirit in the people — a spirit that would prompt them to work willingly ten or twelve hours a day.

Mr Smith: They could close the hotels at six o'clock, and the picture shows altogether.

Mr R. Leitch said that conscript labour would be useless on the farms, because it would be unwilling and half-hearted. Mr Macdonald endorsed this view. Mr Smith said there were lots of agents running round the country who could be more usefully employed. The chairman contended that there were no unoccupied soldiers in the Fairlie district.

Mr Smith said it was absurd to be holding territorial camps now — a sentiment with which all members agreed. It was decided that the chairman call a meeting of the farmers in the county to appoint a committee as asked by the Efficiency Board. Mr Burnett said it would be a mistake to appoint men of military age. It was passed: "That in the opinion of this council, the holding of Territorial Camps should be discontinued at the present time. That the time for women on roads will not have come until all able-bodied men are taken from behind counters; and the council suggests to the Government the purchase of farms of men going to the front, rather than purchase of unimproved estates."

The reply of the Minister of Defence was definite. He stated that the matter had been gone into carefully, and that it was thought inexpedient to forgo the training. In cases where hardship was likely to occur, applications for exemption should be made to the officer commanding the district.

The chairman said it was inconceivable how the Minister could be so obstinate, when he must know that these camps were useless at the present time, and a great drawback to production and national efficiency. It was well

known that the officers in the training camps for the war would prefer raw recruits to men who had to unlearn what they had been taught under the territorial system. The council was unanimously of the opinion that the camps and drills should be dispensed with under present circumstances.

### THE INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC OF 1918

In the summer months of 1918 the greatest epidemic in the history of the country swept New Zealand with grim results. This plague form of pneumonic influenza was a worldwide catastrophe. In Europe, Asia, Africa, North and South America, and Australia, it was estimated that 720,000,000 were affected, with a death roll of 21,000,000. In New Zealand the deaths exceeded 6700. The disease was most virulent in centres of population, and in the matter of months accounted for more lives than those lost from influenza and associated ailments in the preceding forty-six years.

On 15th November 1918, the Mackenzie County Council advertised steps to be taken to prevent the spread of the epidemic. It said that in view of the prevailing epidemic of influenza, the public were requested to take all precautions to prevent its spreading further. As the mode of infection was from person to person, the public were strongly advised to abstain from all gatherings, and to refrain from travelling about the district, unless in cases of absolute necessity. If it were necessary to enter any shop or place of business, they should transact their business as quickly as possible, and not loiter about the premises.

Then they were advised that the indiscriminate use of gargles etc. was not unattended with danger. The best disinfectants were fresh air and sunshine. All halls, public meeting places, should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before reopening. Every householder should make a point of seeing that his premises were kept in a clean and sanitary condition. To conclude, the public's attention was drawn to Section 34 of The Public Health Act 1908, whereby any person who exposes himself knowingly, while suffering from influenza, in any shop, inn, public place, or public vehicle, renders himself liable to a penalty not exceeding £10.

At the council meeting of 13th December, the chairman (Mr E. Macdonald) referred to the influenza epidemic, and remarked that the county had again justified its character as a healthy place. A temporary hospital had been provided at Fairlie, where patients had been isolated and well treated, and as a result of this, and the splendid work done by voluntary workers, the epidemic had been quickly checked. The best thanks of the community were due to all those who had worked so hard and so successfully. There had been only four deaths at Fairlie, and the sympathy of the council would go out to the relatives of the deceased.

### FRANCIS ROBERT GILLINGHAM

Francis Robert Gillingham was a member of the Mackenzie County Council from 1885 to 1893 and from 1896 to 1917, and chairman for twenty-one years from 1896 to 1917. He was defeated conclusively in the Fairlie Riding in the 1917 election by Walter Black who polled 233 votes, another candidate, Robert Leitch, 207 votes, and Mr Gillingham a mere 97 votes.

Commenting after the results were known, Mr Gillingham said he knew of

no reason why he was defeated, but put it down to a desire for a change. His time had come, as it came to most who kept the game up long enough, and he had been given a good innings. Mr Walter Black, who was elected in his place, said that Mr Gillingham owed his defeat to a desire to give younger men, bred and born in the country, a chance in public life, and to the feeling that public positions should be, for that reason, rolling ones.

The *Timaru Herald*, in a fullsome leading article, said that the desire for change was persistent with human nature, for both good and evil. As a general policy, no fault could be found with Mr Black's principle of giving new blood a chance. After pointing out the disadvantages to the community of displacing a man of experience, it points out that if men "bred and born in the country" had been its sole reliance, there would have been no Fairlie, and no New Zealand as we know it at the present day.

Mr Gillingham at the same election was elected unopposed to the South Canterbury Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, but three years later he was defeated by the same Mr Black, again decisively by 226 votes to 189. Mr Gillingham had been a member of the board, representing the Mackenzie, since 1891, a total of twenty-nine years, and for eleven years had been its chairman. Only once in the twenty-nine years had he missed a meeting. General regret at the loss of his long and varied experience, and his firm grasp of finance and administration was widely expressed.

When he died soon afterwards, in 1922, the *Herald* observed: "It was not the conquest of nature that wore out Mr Gillingham. What removed him at 68 was the fact that from 40 onwards, he not only struggled to keep his wife and family, but devoted to the service of the public the hours that others give to rest."

A meeting of the council on 6th November 1922 resolved: "That the council regrets the death of Mr F. R. Gillingham; offers its sympathy to the members of his family; and adjourns for a quarter of an hour as a mark of respect to his memory."

#### FROM GAS TO ELECTRICITY

*The resources of civilisation are not yet exhausted.*

— W. E. Gladstone

A conference of South Canterbury local bodies, called by the mayor of Timaru (Mr J. Maling), was held on 16th November 1917 to consider what steps should be taken to expedite the supply of electric energy to South Canterbury from Lake Coleridge. Mr R. L. Banks and Mr T. D. Burnett were appointed delegates to represent the council.

At the same time the engineer reported that supplies of carbide for the Fairlie gas supply were extremely short, and what was obtainable was very costly. The latest quotations for carbide in small quantities was £84 a ton, Japanese make, quality untried. The consumers had been notified of the position, and that a considerable increase in price must be made with a possibility of a complete stoppage of supplies.

In December, a meeting of gas consumers was held in the county offices. Mr E. Macdonald, county chairman, and Mr Walter Black were present. The chairman said that if it was the wish of the consumers, the council would

carry on, but the price of gas would have to be increased to 20/- per 100 feet. The supply of carbide would last till about the middle or end of March. The feeling of those at the meeting seemed to be that it would be difficult to find an effective light to take the place of the acetylene at a reasonable cost. It was agreed unanimously that they would pay the increased rates, and expressed their appreciation of the council's efforts on their behalf. Mr Black made it clear that it would be impossible to have any more street lights.

In July 1920, Mr G. Murray, a councillor, reported on a deputation which waited on the Prime Minister regarding the extension of Lake Coleridge power to South Canterbury. He concluded that steps should be taken immediately to establish an electricity supply at Fairlie. If they were to wait on the development of any other scheme it would be years before Fairlie was supplied, and he did not think that Lake Coleridge would be able to bear the load. The engineer (Mr Banks) said that Silverstream could provide ample water for a lighting scheme and a water scheme also. The present lighting was anything but satisfactory, and the sooner they got rid of the carbide lighting the better.

A public meeting was held at Fairlie on 6th August, where Mr Murray pushed for a decision in favour of a local supply of electricity. Mr Banks read a report of Mr R. E. Berry, electrical engineer, of Christchurch, which was described as a very complete one, on supplying electric light, plus power at night for pumping water for a high-pressure water supply, to be used in connection with the proposed underground drainage scheme at Fairlie. The estimated cost of the whole undertaking was £7400, and after a lengthy discussion the meeting endorsed unanimously that the council be requested to take preliminary steps in regard to establishing an electricity and high-pressure water supply for Fairlie.

In November, the Governor-General consented to the raising of a loan of £8000 for the work, and a poll on the loan proposal was carried by 97 votes to 8. The usual formalities regarding interest, term of 36½ years, and rating provisions, and sinking fund were attended to. Plans and specifications submitted by Mr R. E. Berry, and endorsed by Mr Lawrence Birks, chief electrical engineer, were approved in February 1921, and Mr Berry was instructed to carry out the work. The Commissioner of Crown Lands advised that before a portion of the Fairlie domain could be set aside as a power house site, a special Act of Parliament would require to be passed, and a survey of the area made. On 6th March 1922 the council was advised that this had been done.

Described as flags flying, business premises closed, the band playing, and the township thronged with people, was the official starting of the hydro-electric scheme on Saturday, 16th September 1922. In a lengthy description of the scheme, the salient features were that the water was obtained from Silverstream, which is fed by three permanent springs on Punaroa settlement, about seven miles from Fairlie. The water was then fed by a race from Silverstream to the dam at the top end of Regent Street, thence by pipe down Regent Street to the power house in the domain. The power house equipment consisted of of a turbine of a single discharge Francis type, erected 10ft above the level of the tail race, switchboards composed of a generator and exciter panel, with the necessary instruments and switch gear; a feeder panel with the necessary apparatus to control the distribution lines and street lighting.

The power house was built of brick with a tiled roof. The reticulation consisted of about five miles of three, two and single-phase distribution lines which could serve an area of approximately 176 houses, shops, etc. The street lighting was arranged on a series system, and provided fifty lamps of 60 and 100 c.p. The total cost of the scheme was £9044, a supplementary loan of £800 being raised.

Lengthy opening proceedings took place in the domain, where Mr T. D. Burnett, M.P., turned on the power. There were many speeches, followed by a dinner given in the Gladstone Hotel, where a lengthy toast list featured. Mr George Murray was referred to as the "father of the scheme", and a prediction made that this enterprise should be an object lesson to the whole of South Canterbury. A plea was also made that there was nothing to fear from the formation of a South Canterbury Electric Power Board.

#### SOUTH CANTERBURY ELECTRIC POWER BOARD

Differences of opinion soon arose as to whether the Mackenzie County should join the power board. As early as January 1921, in answer to a query from the mayor of Timaru (Mr W. C. Raymond), the council decided that it would agree to join the board if formed, the boundaries of the district (inner and outer area) to be settled on later. The chairman (Mr E. Macdonald) considered a lot would depend on whether Timaru joined the power board or not. In April, the chairman reported on a conference of local bodies on the question of inner areas of the several districts. He said that to fall into line with the other counties, he had agreed that the inner area of the Mackenzie County should comprise the Albury, Fairlie and Opuha ridings, excluding the higher country in these ridings. This was adopted.

A stir was caused when the council made a controversial decision on 1st May 1922. It was proposed by Mr C. J. Talbot, and seconded by Mr W. Black, that the council recommend the ratepayers to sign the petition in favour of a power board. This was lost by five votes to three, Mr R. Irving voting in favour, and against were Messrs E. Macdonald, L. J. McGregor, O. M. Hope, G. Murray and J. Moffatt. A summary of the debate gives some idea of the issues as they appeared at the time.

The chairman said he thought the council should give the ratepayers a lead as to whether they should join the proposed South Canterbury Power Board. Mr T. L. Hart, chairman of the provisional power board, had telephoned him, asking what Fairlie was going to do in the matter. So far as he was concerned, he did not think the Mackenzie County should join the board unless it joined as an outer area, in which case it would not be rated.

Mr Owen Hope said he favoured the suggestion made by Cr Walton (W. H. Walton, Timaru Borough Council) that a committee should be set up to enquire into the sources of the power, instead of the power board doing all this work. Mr J. Moffatt said they should not join the power board unless they were going to get some benefit from it. Mr W. Black said he did not agree with the chairman, but they should go ahead and join the power board. He said you might just as well try to stop Niagara Falls as to stop the Tekapo scheme from going on. In Christchurch he was told by prominent business men that if Tekapo were developed Christchurch would soon be left behind as the capital city of the province.

Mr Black said that if they joined as an outer area, they would not be entitled to any current, but if they joined as an inner area they would be entitled to current and representation on the board.

Chairman: One vote in twelve.

Mr Black said that there was every possibility of a wire being run from Timaru to serve the scattered Fairlie district. The chairman repeated that the scheme could still go on with Mackenzie as an outer area. Mr C. J. Talbot was strongly of the opinion that they should join the power board. Mackenzie was not such a thinly populated district after all; farmers would take the power, and he believed that Tekapo would prove one of the cheapest schemes in New Zealand. Mr G. Murray said he was not in favour of Mackenzie joining the power board. Tekapo had been left too long, and people could not afford to go in for it. It would be better to go quietly, and see what they could get from Coleridge. Mr J. Moffatt thought they should go steadily in the matter. They did not know what the power was going to cost them on the farms, but they were told that each plant would cost £20 to £30 and the cost of current would probably be £20 to £30 a year. The lengthy debate then centred around whether or not they should wait for Coleridge, or whether they already knew that Lake Coleridge would be insufficient.

Naturally the decision of the Mackenzie council caused a lot of consternation with accusations that they did not understand the position. A public meeting of residents was called in Fairlie, and the parish hall was crowded for the occasion. The county chairman presided. Mr T. L. Hart, chairman of the provisional power board, Mr T. D. Burnett, M.P., and Mr C. J. Talbot generally gave the reasons for setting up a power board with properly constituted authority, while the chairman and Mr C. Murray succinctly stated their attitudes on the subject. Mr Talbot moved, and Mr T. S. Smith seconded, "That this meeting is of opinion that the Mackenzie county should join the Power Board." After further discussion the motion was carried with a goodly chorus of "ayes". On the call for "noes", there was one loud "aye".

In June a letter was received from the Timaru Borough Council asking support for their resolution that power boards should be constituted by a poll of the ratepayers, in place of the 25% petition. This was endorsed by the council.

From that point things moved rapidly. By 23rd August 1922 the required number of signatures, not less than one-fourth of the number of ratepayers in each portion of the constituent district had been obtained, and on 26th September, petition and signatures were sent to the Governor-General who constituted the power board district on 20th October. Elections were held on 13th December. For the Mackenzie County district there were two candidates, Walter Black and Ernest Macdonald, the latter being elected by 179 votes to 144. The defeat of a loan proposal for £475,000, which included the purchase of the Timaru borough undertaking for £100,000, and report on the development of Lake Tekapo, £5000, was the last we hear of the latter project by the board.

Meanwhile, on 4th September 1922 it was reported to the council that there was a light in every three houses, and they could not expect any more than that. The Minister of Works advised that, owing to the necessity for economy, he could not agree to have the council's electric light installed in the Government

buildings at Fairlie. In December the engineer advised that the gas plant in Fairlie had been dismantled and the pipes taken up, and that a quantity of material in the shape of meters, gas fittings, and piping, could be sold, as well as the generator.

### COAL MINING

One would hardly associate coal mining with the Mackenzie County Council today, and yet for some considerable time it was one of the council's concerns. All decisions were made in consultation with the Mines Department. In November 1917, there is a reference to a letter from the Inspector of Mines in Dunedin, stating that he would shortly inspect the Albury Coal Pit road for which application for a Government grant had been made. A grant of £50 was allowed on a £ for £ basis, plans and specifications submitted to the department approved, and the work completed.

In October 1921, the department approved of a grant of £150 for the Little Opawa bridge being transferred to the Albury Coal Pit road. On 9th January 1922 the Mines Department approved of plans and specifications for work to be done, and the expenditure of a grant of £200 for the Albury Coal Pit road.

Meanwhile a new venture was taking shape near Winscombe, not far from Fairlie. On 1st July 1921, a letter was received from the Public Works Department, asking the council to undertake the work of forming and metalling a new road in the Lambrook settlement for which £375 was available. It was decided that the Fairlie gang do the work. At the same time an application for the formation of a road to a new coal mine near Winscombe was held over pending a test as to the value of the mine. The Commissioner of Crown Lands was having a report obtained from the Inspector of Mines. Mr Banks said the inspector desired to have some bores put down to test the field.

At the same meeting of the council, two samples of coal from new sources were shown to the members. One was from the newly opened seam alongside the railway a little to the south of Winscombe, a dull brown lignite, and somewhat like Chamberlain coal. The other was a bright specimen from the Mount Gerard run, between Richmond and the Macauley River. It resembled in appearance bright Kaitangata, and burned with a bright flame, while the first specimen did not burn readily.

On 10th October, the chairman (Mr E. Macdonald) reported that he and Mr Banks had seen the Commissioner of Crown Lands and discussed the matter of a road into Smillie's coal mine at Winscombe, and this had been agreed to. They also suggested that local bodies should receive a royalty of, say, 6d a ton on coal taken from mines to which they provide access. If the local bodies had to maintain a road to a mine they should be recompensed to some extent for doing so. In the case of Mr Smillie's mine, the coal went for the most part to Timaru, and there was no reason why the Mackenzie County Council should provide access to a mine for the benefit of the Timaru people. If the mine owner had to pay a royalty of 6d a ton to the council, he could add it to the price of the coal.

On the same day as advice had been received that boring results were satisfactory, and the Commissioner of Crown Lands had also approved, it was agreed that a road be formed and shingled to the Lambrook coal pit, provided

the lessee agreed to the formation of the road. Mr J. Murphy agreed to this being done. Apparently it was not until August 1922 that the grant of £50, £ for £, was finally approved. Plans and specifications were drawn up, and these in turn approved.

The next reference was not until 2nd July 1923, when Messrs J. McDonald and C. Sim drew attention to the bad state of the new road through Lambbrook settlement, work on which had been left unfinished. It was decided that the work be done "when Rudd's road is completed". On 3rd March the following year, the chairman reported that the formation and gravelling of the new road at Lambbrook settlement had been completed.

#### A NEW LOOK FOR FORESTRY

In September 1922 the Forestry Department granted to the Mackenzie County Council the freehold over the plantation reserves in the county, provided the council gave an earnest of its intention to carry on its progressive planting programme. The approximate area of the reserve was 6000 acres, and Captain MacIntosh Ellis, Superintendent of Forests, arranged to visit Fairlie to discuss with councillors, and advise regarding operations that would make for a big forward movement, not only by the council but also among the back-country people generally.

Mr T. D. Burnett, in a lengthy letter to the council, expressed his views on forestry. He thought the council should establish a nursery of its own, and have a planting programme. A scheme should be worked out with the run-holders interested, and to take in and form part of the planting which they are required to do under conditions of lease. To plant fifty acres in the gully running up to the head of Burkes Pass, parallel with Long Cutting, twenty acres on the south-east side of Dog Kennel Point, forty acres on the south-east side of Deadman's Point, forty acres on the south-east side of Edward's Point, 100 acres on the south-east and lake side of Mount John, at least five areas of fifty acres each along the main road between Balmoral and Simon's Pass, two blocks of 100 acres each on the south-end margin, and south-east bay of Lake Pukaki, the island in the lake to be planted, the plantation reserve of 500 acres at the lake head end of Pukaki to be wiped out and broken up into four blocks, to be marked out between the tourist road and the lakeside, and within view of each of the Rhoborough soldier homesteads.

The county chairman, Mr E. Macdonald, said the scheme outlined was a comprehensive one; it would cost a lot of money, but he did not suppose that Mr Burnett proposed that it should be carried out all at once. The work should be done year by year as revenue was available. In years to come the revenue from the plantations would make it possible to reduce the county rate. A motion of thanks was passed to Mr Burnett, and the chairman said the council would be very pleased to receive a visit from Captain Ellis.

Captain Ellis subsequently visited Fairlie, had a long discussion with the council, explained the terms upon which the Government would hand over the plantations, and discussed afforestation generally. He also inspected several of the plantations in the county.

In November the State Forest Service forwarded a draft of proposed legislation in connection with the plantation reserves. Then, on 4th December, the council was informed that the Minister had agreed to the reservation of

about sixty acres at the Long Cutting, Burkes Pass, for plantation purposes, on condition that the council paid the costs of the survey required. It was decided to make the survey.

Legislative authority must have gone through, as on 23rd May 1923, a letter was received from the Forestry Department advising that rents of plantation reserves should in future be collected by the council. The chairman and clerk were directed to go into the matter of giving longer leases with the object of obtaining greater revenue.

#### “LEST WE FORGET”

In addition to the fact that at the time the planting of a “peace avenue” on the main road, with trees two chains apart and fenced, was already in train, on 11th July 1919, an advertisement called a public meeting in Fairlie Parish Hall to consider the question of a suitable memorial to fallen soldiers from the county. The idea could not have been proceeded with at the time, as another meeting for the same purpose was called for 14th June 1921. The county memorial was eventually completed in 1929.

#### ASHWICK FLAT MEMORIAL

Meanwhile, on 9th June 1921, a memorial to the men who served in the Great War of 1914-1918 was unveiled at the Cross Roads, Ashwick Flat (now known as Monument Corner). Following the first verse of the National Anthem was a verse said to be taken from the Canadian Anthem:

*Our loved Dominion bless  
With peace and happiness  
From shore to shore,  
And let our Empire be  
United, loyal, free,  
True to herself and Thee  
For ever more.*

A memorial oak was planted by Mr T. D. Burnett, M.P. Addresses were given by Mr Burnett, Mr S. P. Bray, chairman of the memorial committee, Mr E. Macdonald, county chairman, Dr C. Stanley Fraser, Fairlie R.S.A., and the Rev. A. C. W. Standage. Mr Burnett unveiled the inscriptions on the memorial, Piper J. A. MacDonald played a lament, and Bugler W. J. Ormandy sounded the Last Post. The Fairlie band rendered items before and after the service.

#### ALBURY MEMORIAL

A news item says that no fewer than twenty of the men who went from the Albury district to serve in the Great War gave their lives for their country. On 8th January 1922, a large gathering of people in the township was assembled when a substantial, artistic and imposing monument was unveiled. All parts of the district between Pleasant Point and Mount Cook were represented in the assembly. The monument, which was the work of Mr J. McBride, stands in the centre of the township where “every resident, and every traveller by road and rail can see it.”

Mr W. Tasman Smith presided, and Mr T. D. Burnett unveiled the monument, which cost £225. Mr Donald Stewart was chairman of the memorial committee, Mr Dick secretary, and Mr Vigers treasurer. Speakers were Mr Smith, Mr Burnett, the Rev. Stanley Hinson, and Mr C. J. Talbot. At the conclusion of the ceremony wreaths were reverently placed on the base of the monument.

MACKENZIE COUNTY WAR MEMORIAL

It was not until Sunday, 15th December 1929, that the Mackenzie County War Memorial was unveiled in Fairlie in the presence of a large gathering of residents of the county and visitors from various parts of South Canterbury.

The parade, which consisted of the Timaru Municipal Band under Lieut. W. H. Osborne; returned soldiers (forty-nine, of all ranks) under Captain A. N. Oakey, M.C., and Mr F. W. Buckley; the executive committee of the war memorial; Mackenzie Pipe Band under Drum Major B. Slow; Fairlie school children under Messrs C. Southgate and S. Cooper; and children from various schools in the county, formed up at the post office and marched to the site of the memorial. On the platform with the chairman of the committee, Mr C. J. Talbot, were the Rev. Father Barra, Rev. C. G. Wilcox, Rev. J. T. McWilliam, Mr J. Bitchener, M.P., and Captain Oakey.

Mr Talbot commended the work of the designer, Mr H. W. Hall, of Timaru, and the builders, Messrs McBride and Co., of Timaru. He said the design was unique in South Canterbury — not a cenotaph, or solely a monument to those buried elsewhere. It was a catafalque, a cairn upon which symbolically the remains of the Unknown Soldier were elevated, and were contained in the representation of a casket at the top of the structure. The base was composed of glacial boulders, and the shaft of limestone blocks. The whole erection was therefore constructed of indigenous stone. Thus, symbolically, the Warrior rested on his native soil.

Other addresses were given by Captain Oakey, and the main address by Father Barra. The memorial was dedicated by the Rev. Mr McWilliam, and unveiled by Mr Bitchener. The verse of the Canadian Anthem used at Ashwick Flat was added to the National Anthem.

## SECOND WORLD WAR

A plaque bearing the names of twenty-four men from the Mackenzie County who made the supreme sacrifice in the 1939-1945 war was unveiled during a ceremony held at the cenotaph in Fairlie on Sunday, 13th November 1949.

The memorial was unveiled by Mrs C. V. Kirke, and special church services were held in St Stephen's Anglican Church and St Columba Presbyterian Church. The preachers were the Rev. W. M. Heerdegen and the Rev. T. G. Calder respectively. On the plaque were inscribed the words:

*If gallant death be valour's noblest pride,  
How proud their names who for their country died.*

Then followed the list of names, but at a subsequent date another line was added: Korea — 1954 — J. B. Burbrough.

## PUBLIC WORKS: 1914-1923

To give a list of the work carried out by the council staff would take volumes, and not every piece of work had to be approved beforehand. Going over the engineer's monthly reports for the two years 1920 and 1921, taken as a sample, it shows that routine work took up considerable time. Briefly, it included regular maintenance, surfacing, regrading, repairs to roads, culverts and bridges, a certain amount of shingling, fencing, repairs following flood damage, stone breaking, and the planning and use of gangs by the engineer. On the other hand, a great deal of work of this nature originated from letters to the council. Over the two years referred to, the council dealt with 567 items on the agenda, of which 206 related to public works. Under this heading are roads, culverts, bridges, fords, crossings, planting willows and poplars, plantations, water races, cemeteries, library, and, of course, all business relating to the letting of contracts, approval by Government departments, and the like. Council minutes include:

### GOVERNMENT GRANTS

In November 1914, the Public Works Department advised the following grants voted to the council:

Braemar - Mount Cook Station	£150	£ for £
Cave to Pareora River road	£150	£ for £
Fairlie to Lake Tekapo road	£100	£ for £
Gladstone Creek bridge	£200	
Glenmore Creek bridge	£75	
Haldon pastoral runs access	£200	£ for £
Rocky Gully bridges	£150	£ for £
Stoney Creek bridge	£100	£ for £
Lake Tekapo to Lake Pukaki road	£200	
Pukaki bridge	£200	
Middle Valley road	£100	

### GLADSTONE AND GLENMORE CREEK BRIDGES

These are mentioned above. A tender from D. McInness for £274 was accepted.

### STONEY CREEK BRIDGE

In February 1915, Mrs Frank Barker, Ashwick, applied for the erection of a bridge over the Stoney Creek at her homestead. The council would erect the bridge if she would contribute toward the cost. She could not see her way to do this, but would pay interest on £100 at 5% for five years. The council would not alter its previous decision. The matter came up again in September when the council decided to build the bridge from the surplus of a Government grant from Hammond's bridge. Then, in November, Mr John Grant and others asked for a light traffic bridge over Stoney Creek near Ashwick homestead. This was built.

### MOUNT NESSING ROAD

In August 1915, it was decided that if an engine could be obtained a portion of the Mount Nessing road was to be shingled with Tengawai River shingle, using the haulage trucks, and the unfinished portion of Camp Valley

road shingling done at the same time. In July 1917, Mr G. G. Hayter, Albury, asked permission to erect a post on the Mount Nessing road for the purpose of running a cage wire to his side of the river. Granted.

#### SHERWOOD DOWNS ROAD

In 1917 an application was made for a light coat of shingle on the upper Middle Road as in winter it was in a very bad state. Tenders were called for 107 chain of Middle Road and 40 chain of Morris Road. A tender of 4/3 per cubic yard was negotiated. In November 1918, the Commissioner of Crown Lands asked for the council's consent to a new road being laid off up the north branch of the Opuha River. Approved.

#### SHERWOOD DOWNS BRIDGE

In September 1917, Mr F. Holland and twenty-four other residents asked for a light bridge over Sherwood Downs Creek on the Plantation Road, and for a plank footbridge over the Ribbonwood Creek on the same road. This was agreed to and charged to the Government grant for Sherwood Downs Road.

#### ROCKWOOD SCHOOL BRIDGE

In April 1917, the engineer reported on an application for a light traffic bridge at Rockwood School over the Opipi River, the cost of the work, using materials in stock by the Levels County Council, estimated at £180. It was resolved to contribute the sum of £75 towards the cost if the settlers of the Mackenzie County who would benefit by the work would contribute £15. The council suggested that the work be carried out by the Levels County, and the bridge when erected be under the control of that body. The Levels County Council agreed to do the work, and pay half the cost, plans to be approved by the Mackenzie County engineer.

#### JOLLIE RIVER BRIDGE

In 1917, a tender for £769/13/8 by J. Hamblin was accepted for the building of the Jollie River bridge, Mr T. D. Burnett to contribute £400 to the cost. Later the bridge was reduced in length to 240ft, and the tender lowered to £233/7/11, the Government grant for the work finding the balance. Subsequently certain work had to be done to the bridge to keep the river from breaking out of its course.

#### CAVE - PAREORA ROAD

The Public Works Department authorised the expenditure of a Government grant of £150, £ for £, for the Cave Hill Road deviation.

#### MA WARO CREEK BRIDGE

In December 1919, it was decided that a light traffic bridge be erected over the creek on the main road between Albury and Ma Waro. The following month the width of a new reinforced concrete culvert for Ma Waro Creek was fixed at 22ft. Expenditure of Government grants was authorised and the work proceeded with.

#### RAINCLIFF CREEK BRIDGE

In October 1922, tenders were called for the erection of a light bridge over the Raincliff Creek on the Middle Valley Road. The Public Works Department approved the plans and authorised the work to be done. A tender of £319/19/- from Thomas Foden was accepted.

#### DOVERS PASS ROAD DEVIATION

On 7th May 1923, the Public Works Department approved plans of the Dovers Pass deviation, and Ben Ohau Road gravelling, for which Government grants of £300 and £150 were available.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1914

##### WATERFRONT STRIKE

A letter was received from the secretary of the Timaru Shipping Protection Association, asking for a donation to assist the Waterside Workers Union in recognition of their keeping the port open during the recent strike. A sum of £5/5/- was voted.

##### RT HON. W. F. MASSEY'S VISIT

The chairman reported that during April he had entertained the Prime Minister on behalf of the council. The chairman's action was confirmed.

##### SOUTH CANTERBURY EDUCATION BOARD

The council supported a letter from the Timaru School committee protesting against the abolition of the South Canterbury Education District.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1915

##### WINTER TRAFFIC

The Mount Cook Motor Company applied for a permit to run their motor lorry from Fairlie to Mount Cook from the middle of September, owing to the Hermitage being opened earlier this year. — Declined.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1916

##### WINTER CARTING

The Tourist Department applied for a permit to cart one lorry load of coal to the Hermitage during the month of June. — Declined.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1917

##### HORSE FEED

The following tenders were accepted to supply horse feed:

Oats at Albury	1400 bushels	D. Irving at 3/3 per bushel
Oats at Fairlie	3000 bushels	D. Irving at 3/7½ per bushel
Chaff at Albury	16 tons	I. H. Corbett, £3/5/- a ton
Chaff at Fairlie	15 tons	T. E. Thornley, £3/5/- a ton
Chaff at Fairlie	20 tons	R. Pinkerton, £2/12/6 a ton

##### ALLAN MCLEAN PARK

Mrs A. H. McLean, Timaru, handed over to the council  $3\frac{3}{4}$  acres of her land for recreational purposes. She wished it to be known as the Allan McLean Park, in memory of her late husband. Mrs McLean also forwarded a cheque for £10 for keeping the ground in order for one year.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1918

### SMALL BIRDS' EGGS

It was agreed that heads and eggs of sparrows, linnets, larks, blackbirds, and thrushes be purchased from 1st November till 31st March in each year at the rate of 3d a dozen, poisoned grain for small birds to be supplied free to ratepayers during the winter months.

### JOSEPH BINNEY

In July the chairman referred to the death of Mr Joseph Binney, for many years chairman of the Fairlie cemetery committee and prominent in other bodies for the good of Fairlie and the county generally. The council recorded its regret, which was conveyed to the relatives.

### EDUCATION BOARD

The Minister of Education advised that the council's request for the re-establishment of the South Canterbury Education Board could not be complied with.

### SNOW PLOUGHING

The Canterbury Sheep Owners' Union expressed their appreciation of the council's services to back-country sheep owners in opening the roads during the recent snowstorm.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1919

### MEN FOR HARVEST

It was decided to allow the employees to go off for harvest if there is a scarcity of labour, Tekapo Riding men to remain at work, and to be allowed a bonus of £3 in lieu of harvest wages earned by the other men.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1920

### HARVESTING

It was resolved that no leave be given to the council's employees this year to go harvesting, and that the men be told that should they go, their places would be filled.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1921

### ASSISTANT ENGINEER

On 4th February 1921, an assistant engineer was appointed out of eleven applicants. He was Mr W. S. Rae, of Dunedin. He resigned as at April 1924, but a successor was not appointed. Instead, Mr R. E. Vincent of Albury was appointed working overseer out of nine applicants for the position.

### GANGER D. MURPHY

On 10th January 1921, an expression of the council's regret at the death of Ganger Murphy was recorded in the minutes. He was a very old and highly respected servant of the council, having served for forty years. Several councillors attended the funeral.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1923

### TELEPHONE LINES

Applications were received and approved for permission to erect telephone lines on the following roads:

Main Road, Lake Tekapo to Simons Pass

Lake Tekapo to Godley Peaks

Lake Tekapo to Rhoborough Downs settlement

Lake Pukaki to Ben Ohau settlement

Loans raised for these lines were: Godley Peaks, £400; Rhoborough, £300; and Ben Ohau, £400. A further loan was raised for £550 for the maintenance and erection of telephone lines to Lilybank, Mount Gerald and Richmond stations. There is no record of Tekapo to Simons Pass being proceeded with.

# 7

## From Affluence to Depression

### DEVASTATING FLOOD DAMAGE

The county engineer, Mr R. L. Banks, reported that on 26th and 27th December 1924 heavy rains caused a flood in several parts of the county, with resultant damage. The rainfall was exceptionally heavy on the Two Thumb, Rollesby, Dalgety and Ohau ranges, and the streams and rivers having their sources in these ranges were all in high flood. The principal damage was the carrying away of two spans, and the wrecking of the third span on the Opuha (Skipton) bridge, on the Fairlie to Geraldine road. Two piers of the bridge over the Opihi on the Fairlie to Burkes Pass road were carried away, and a motor lorry broke through one of the spans and damaged another. Temporary repairs were effected, and the bridge was being used for traffic. New girders would require to be provided to allow the bridge being used until the new traffic bridge was erected.

Approaches to the following bridges were damaged: Edwards Creek, North Opuha River at Clayton settlement, Rocky Gully on Upper Mount Nessing road, Exe Creek, Rhoborough Downs Creek. Temporary repairs had been effected on all these bridges, and they were available for light traffic. Other bridge approaches damaged and not yet repaired were: Boundary Creek on the Richmond road, Opawa River at Mount Nessing, Stoney Creek at Ashwick Station, and Twizel River on the Ohau River road. A footbridge over the Opawa River above the Mount Nessing School, and a small stock bridge at the upper end of the Mount Nessing road were carried away. One pier of the Ashwick bridge was carried out of alignment.

Roads had been scoured in a number of places, and the roads up Stoney Creek and Firewood Creek were cut away to some extent. The headworks of the Ashwick water races had been damaged by gravel washing into the headrace. The supply of water was completely cut off, and it would take about a week's work of a gang to repair. Damaged roads and bridges were being repaired as speedily as possible.

Mr Banks was in the North Island at the time the storm hit, but he returned immediately, when he saw the newspaper reports. He said he would like to express his appreciation of the good work done by the county overseer, Mr R. E. Vincent, during his absence and since his return. He showed practical resource in devising expedients in opening the roads and bridges for traffic.

Mr Banks praised the council's staff for the loyal and ready assistance given during their holiday leave, when long hours were worked under unpleasant conditions. "I think, on the whole, the county has come through the flood fairly well," said Mr Banks. At the council meeting there were also hearty votes of thanks passed to the chairman (Mr Talbot) for his services during the flood, to Mr Banks for returning from his trip to the North Island, and to Mr Vincent and the county staff for work promptly and efficiently performed. There were also votes of thanks proposed by Mr J. McCort, to Messrs McAuley, Hartley, F. H. Smith, H. S. Dale and R. C. Curtis for assistance provided in the Albury Riding.

A sour note was sounded when it was stated that the Mount Cook Motor Company had taken a heavy load across the bridge on the Fairlie to Burkes Pass road in spite of warning, and had caused considerable damage. It was stated that the public were indignant at the action of the company. It was decided to inform the company that the council intended to hold it liable for the cost of the repairs.

### OPUHA AND OPIHI RIVER BRIDGES

The damage done to the Opuha and Opihi River bridges in the flood of December 1924 necessitated their rebuilding, although this was going to be done in any case. The Opuha River bridge, for some reason referred to as the North River bridge, is on the Clayton Road, and the Opihi bridge is on the Fairlie-Burkes Pass highway. Temporary repairs were affected after the floods. In addition there was the Skipton bridge which was also rebuilt.

#### OPIHI RIVER BRIDGE

In January 1925, it was resolved to have the damage done by the Mount Cook Motor Company's lorry repaired as cheaply as possible, the cost of the labour to be charged to the company. On 1st December 1924, a tender by Mr Thomas Murray for £1148/2/3 had been accepted, but due to the flooding this was delayed. The following July it was reported that construction was well under way.

#### OPUHA BRIDGE (NORTH RIVER BRIDGE)

Here again, on 1st December 1924, a tender by Mr Thomas Murray for £2280/7/- had been accepted for the erection of a bridge over the south Opuha River, "commonly known as the North River", on Clayton Road. On 5th November 1925, there was an official opening of this bridge when Mrs Talbot, the wife of the county chairman, cut a tartan ribbon and declared the bridge open.

In an address, Mr Talbot pointed out that, looking back to 1911, there were only five holdings on the north side of the river, whereas now there were thirty-six. The capital value of the properties in 1911 was £115,660, whereas they now stood at £231,639. The cost of the bridge, including approach banks, training walls, fences, etc., would be close on £3000. A Government grant of £1500 had been obtained on a £ to £ basis, and the balance had been borrowed from the State Advances office at about 6% over 36½ years. The North River bridge was renewed in reinforced concrete in 1975.

#### SKIPTON BRIDGE

The Opuha bridge on the Geraldine-Fairlie road at Skipton is a county boundary bridge administered by the Geraldine County, half the cost being met by the Mackenzie County. It is now a secondary state highway with full costs met by the National Roads Board, but in 1925 would have been a main highway with some main highway contribution to the cost being met equally by the two counties. All work was done by the Geraldine County Council.

On 7th July 1924, before the floods, the Geraldine County Council asked for the approval of the Mackenzie council of a proposed expenditure of £1645 on the reconstruction of this bridge, the council's share being £548. This was agreed to, the balance of the cost after the Highways Council contribution to be shared equally.

The flood intervened, and in January 1925 the county engineer conferred with the Geraldine County engineer (Mr C. E. Bremner) in connection with a temporary restoration of the bridge, where three spans had been carried away. The next we hear is of a farcical "unofficial" opening of a light traffic bridge, notable for the absence of councillors and members of Parliament. The structure is described as of the resurrection type, old stuff having been restored to life, and tar-splashed to give a general appearance of efficiency and respectability. After cutting a single cord of binder twine, the company retired to the Mackenzie side of the river to honour a few toasts — the left bank being kept sacred to the principles of prohibition.

The Skipton bridge was washed out in the 1945 floods, and the present reinforced concrete bridge built about 1951.

#### A BLAZING MINE

In July 1924, the county engineer, Mr R. L. Banks, reported on a fire in the Albury coal mine at Chamberlain. Described in the news media as "Smoke by day, flames by night", the fire had been burning for some two or three years, and was now dangerously near the Mackenzie Pass Road. Where the fire had burnt itself out, subsidences of the land had taken place as much as 20ft in places, and similar results were expected when the road was reached.

Mr J. McCort urged the council to take the matter in hand, as it had become serious. Already the course of the fire could be traced for over half a mile, and it was then close to the road where there was a hole large enough to hold the council chambers. There was no way of diverting the road. There was no stream nearby that could be turned into the mine. The only way was to pump water from the nearest creek which was a long way from the scene. The fire was following the workings round, and as it went the roof of the tunnel fell in, and it fed the fire still more.

The Under Secretary of Mines, in reply to a letter from the council, said Mr T. F. Slowey was employing a man cutting into the stiff clay overburden and spreading it over the burning area, and he worked there himself as much as possible. He intended to strip all the overburden 6ft to 12ft in thickness from near the mine mouth, and about twenty-five yards to the west. Then, if the fire permitted, he would make a trench by removing all the coal. The department was thanked for the letter.

Then in October, for the third time, Mr McCort raised the matter again. He said the fire was raging as fiercely as ever, and it was not safe for vehicle

traffic to pass over Mackenzie Pass near the coal mine, as the fire was now less than a yard from the road, if it was not actually underneath it. He said he had inspected the fire the previous night and found it a roaring furnace. Members of the council inspected the fire as soon as the ordinary business of the meeting was over, and agreed that Mr McCort had not exaggerated the gravity of the situation. The mine was seen to be on fire over a large area, and there was a great yawning pit just inside the road fence where the earth had fallen in, owing to the mine having not been timbered. An urgent telegram was sent to the Minister of Mines.

In November the department advised that Mr Slowey had been instructed to see that more effective steps were taken to restrain the fire, and to fill up the hole in the vicinity of the road. Mr Slowey was told that unless this was done the Minister would not grant a fresh lease to him, and he must stop mining in the meantime.

In January 1925, the under secretary of the department advised that a vote of £140 was available for extinguishing the fire. The chairman said he did not know whether they could put the fire out for £140, if at all. Mr A. F. Campbell said the department and not the council should get in touch with Mr Slowey. This course was recommended to the department. The following meeting informed the inspector that it had no objection to the lease being transferred to Mr J. H. Smillie, who had been instructed to have the work done to stop the fire. In March 1926, Mr J. Moffatt reported that the road was now perfectly safe. The work of Mr Smillie was worthy of praise, and he must have had a lion's heart to accomplish what he did. There was little smoke now, and probably the fire would soon be out.

In March 1927, the council permitted Mr J. H. Smillie to tunnel underneath Mackenzie Pass Road to enable him to work the coal field. Apparently there was some trouble later, as in May 1928 Mr Smillie thanked the council, and Mr R. E. Vincent, the council's overseer, for their assistance during a recent fire at the Albury coal mine.

#### IRRESPONSIBLE SHOOTING

In May 1926, Mr J. Moffatt drew attention to the dangerous and foolish practice adopted by some motorists of shooting at private letter boxes as they drove along the public roads. He said that the police should be asked to take action in the matter. With this all members agreed, and Mr F. H. Buckley added that an equally reprehensible practice was that of shooting at rabbits on the roadside from motor cars. Some day this would result in a fatal accident, and he supposed that action would be taken then. It was decided to draw the attention of the police to these matters.

#### BANKS ISLAND

In a social way, at the conclusion of the council meeting of 3rd May 1926, Mr R. L. Banks, the county engineer and clerk, was presented with a case of high quality pipes. The gift was accompanied by the hope that Mr Banks would remain many years in Fairlie to preside over the affairs of the big county, as satisfactorily as he had done in the past. In order to do him the honour of perpetuating his name in the county, it was unanimously decided to call the unnamed island in Lake Tekapo, adjoining Motu Ariki, "Banks Island".

## A VISIT TO MOTU ARIKI

In 1926 a visit of inspection was made to Motu Ariki, the island in Lake Tekapo. The party visiting the island were Mr and Mrs C. J. Talbot, Mr and Mrs F. H. Buckley, Mr and Mrs J. McCort, Mr and Mrs A. F. Campbell, Mr and Mrs H. S. P. Manaton, and Mr and Mrs J. Moffatt. The ladies were in charge of the commissariat.

The island comprised sixty-six acres, said to be planted for the benefit of generations to follow, a vacant space being left at the top of the island for a band rotunda. In some aspects the island was unique — there were no rabbits on it, and there was not a noxious weed. Cocksfoot was growing in abundance. It was said that the island, once owned by the holder of Tekapo Station, was used for the sequestration of rams. Trees flourishing included *p. muricata*, *p. ponderosa*, larch, *cupressus*, *lawsonia* and highly valued oregon pine. Mr Talbot suggested that fruit trees and strawberries might now be planted there, and that wekas might be liberated on the island, as anything done in these directions would attract holidaymakers, and further advertise the county as one of the most attractive in New Zealand.

Mention was made of the other little island, later named Banks Island. It embraced five to six acres, and was covered with a wealth of native vegetation, manifold species of veronicas, also kauri trees and the matipo, and a variety of other native plants.

After visiting other plantations on the trip, including Long Cutting and Paddy's Market, Mr Talbot said that in all, Mackenzie had about 5000 acres of reserves for planting trees of which 610 acres had been planted, the former bringing in a revenue of £522 a year. He said that in years to come the Mackenzie County would be known, not only for the excellence of its roads and bridges, but also for the monument it had reared for itself through its fine afforestation work.

## SALE OF ELECTRICITY PLANT

At the council meeting of 6th June 1927, the chairman (Mr Talbot) reported that a sub-committee comprising himself, Messrs A. F. Campbell and R. L. Banks, had met representatives of the South Canterbury Electric Power Board, and had come to a unanimous agreement to sell the Fairlie electricity plant. The proposed sale to the power board was a purchase price of £9580. The board would relieve the council of all liabilities in regard to its electricity loans, amounting to £9080, and pay the difference of £500 to the council in cash.

It was agreed that the board take over the plant as at 1st October, or some other date to be mutually arranged. The board would maintain the street lighting as at present for £200 a year, or according to the board's schedule, whichever was lower. The council would deliver to the board at the Fairlie sub-station up to nine cusecs of water, maintain the present water race, the board contributing one-third of the annual cost of maintenance, based on the present water supply. The board was to supply the town's siren with current, and the domain fountain with water, free of charge.

Mr Talbot said it seemed to him that the proposed arrangement was a fair one. They had met as local bodies, each looking after the same set of ratepayers, and although the council would not get quite as much as expected,

it was a fair business proposition. As soon as the power board took over the plant, a substantial reduction in charges would be made. In reply to Mr Manaton, the chairman said the ratepayers would be fully protected under the agreement. He moved that the proposed agreement be approved and adopted. Mr J. McCort, in seconding the motion, said he thought the agreement was a very good one and the committee should be thanked for their services. The motion was carried.

At a subsequent meeting there was considerable discussion as to whether the £500 should be invested, and the interest spent on parks and reserves in Fairlie. The plant was actually taken over by the power board on 1st April 1928.

Statistics in connection with the scheme for the year ended 31st March 1927 were: Number of consumers, 183; units generated, 66,386; units sold, 59,170; peak load, 29.28 k.w., total connected load, 142,655; diversity factor, 4.87; net revenue per unit sold — lighting and irons, 8.05d; street lighting, 3.1d; motor, 3.08d.

#### ROBERT LINDSAY BANKS

When Mr R. L. Banks retired as clerk-engineer to the Mackenzie County Council in April 1929, he had completed forty years service to the county, which would be hard to parallel anywhere else in New Zealand. When he took over these duties first in 1889, he followed Mr James Cochrane, just six years after the county seceded from the Geraldine County, and continued the Mount Cook Road Board as a going concern. He undertook the work as a young man when bridges were few and many roads little more than tracks. His work as county engineer was by no means a sinecure. It involved much travelling over back-country roads, often under terrible climatic conditions, snow-bound country and flooded rivers having often to be negotiated. His means of locomotion was first on horseback, by buggy, then by push bicycle, later by motor cycle, and finally by motor car. When he left, it was said that the Mackenzie County was one of the best planted in the Dominion, and the scheme of afforestation it had was largely his. He promoted and carried to success the electric lighting scheme on which Fairlie could pride itself. He was a man of wide reading, and the well equipped Carnegie library in Fairlie was brought into being by his efforts.

Needless to say, there was a round of farewells for Mr Banks, but the most notable was a public farewell and concert which filled the Aorangi Hall in Fairlie, and eulogies were delivered on behalf of many interests. The county council marked his departure with a gift of six months leave of absence on full pay.

In seeking for a successor, the council paid him an unconscious compliment in that it advertised for a county clerk at £350 per annum, separately from a county engineer at £400 per annum rising to £450 after the first year, motor car provided. There were thirty-three applicants for the position of county clerk, and seventeen for that of county engineer. However, the two positions were amalgamated and Mr James Frederick Dudley Jeune was appointed at £500 with an instrument allowance of £12 per annum, and a clerical assistant, male or female, at £130 per annum. Mr Jeune was town clerk and borough overseer at Temuka. He commenced duties in April 1929.

Mr Banks died in Oamaru on 8th May 1946.

## SATURDAY HALF-HOLIDAY PROPOSAL

There was a reversal of previous policy at the council's special meeting on 27th January 1930, when it was decided that the statutory half-holiday should be on Saturday instead of Thursday. The change was made on the casting vote of the chairman, Mr C. J. Talbot, but the council did not get away with it.

Two requisitions signed by advocates of Thursday and Saturday were handed to the council. The first was signed by 12 shopkeepers, and the latter bore 124 signatures including 45 residents, 20 farmers and 59 employees. A deputation from each party waited on the council. The first deputation, consisting of Messrs L. M. Brice, J. Braddick and F. Lake, spoke in favour of Thursday as a holiday. In the present day, the council was told, when there was such an unsettled financial position, it was not advisable to change from the state prevailing at present. They wanted also to eliminate the prevailing spirit of antagonism.

Supporters of the Saturday half-holiday were represented by Messrs Morton and Parfitt. For the most part the views expressed were negative to those of the previous deputation. After the deputations withdrew, Mr W. T. Smith moved, and Mr G. Murray seconded, that the present half-holiday (Thursday) be observed. An amendment favouring Saturday was moved by Mr W. Scott and seconded by Mr F. H. Buckley. The voting was equal, and T. J. Seay and the chairman voted for Thursday and Saturday respectively.

Mr Smith: And what about you, Mr Campbell?

Mr Campbell said he was disgusted with the whole thing. He voted dozens of times on this question, and had always voted for Thursday. When Mr Smith pointed out that he had another chance now, Mr Campbell said he didn't want to vote at all. If the people want Saturday as their half-holiday, then vote for it. It was then that the chairman gave his casting vote for Saturday.

Then came one of those rounds of red tape that sickens those who wish to get things done. The Labour Department refused to publish the Gazette notice on the grounds that the special meeting had not been properly constituted. The minute book did not show any record of the requisition calling the special meeting. Another technical breach had been committed in the notice advising the department of the change, in that the chairman's name had been typed instead of being signed. The clerk's name had been signed, but the department held that the chairman's signature should have been affixed also. It was now open for the Minister to fix the day of the half-holiday, and in such cases it was usual for him to declare in favour of the present day, which was the Thursday. Mr Murray expressed the opinion that if the chairman's casting vote had been for Thursday, everything would have been all right. It was then agreed to allow the matter to drop pending the advice of the minister, but the petitions which were in the hands of the council were forwarded to him.

In April, advice was received from the Minister of Labour (Hon. W. A. Veitch) stating that the statutory requirements regarding the fixing of the half-holiday had not been complied with, and the fact that Saturday was favoured only on the casting vote of the chairman he had decided to adhere to the usual practice and appoint Thursday, the existing day, as the half-holiday. Shopkeepers who desired to observe Saturday as the closing day could do so on giving notice in writing to the Inspector of Factories.

An account, addressed to Mr G. Murray, for £10/10/-, from Messrs Raymond, Raymond and Campbell, solicitors, was submitted to the council by Mr Murray. The fee was for work in connection with the half-holiday protest. The chairman said Mr Murray had no authority to consult a solicitor on behalf of the council.

Mr Campbell: Surely Mr Murray is not serious!

Mr Smith said the council should not be held liable for the account, although the ratepayers who favoured Thursday were greatly indebted to Mr Murray for what he had done. In his opinion it was the duty of the ratepayers who favoured Thursday to pay the account. A motion that the account be not entertained was carried.

The following year, January 1931, there was a petition by twelve retailers requesting that Thursday be retained, and as there were no other petitions, the chairman said that, although he had not altered his opinion about Saturday, he was agreeable to allow matters to remain as at present. The motion retaining Thursday was passed without further discussion.

## THE GREAT ECONOMIC DEPRESSION

Frugalitas miseria est rumoris boni.

*Economy is wretchedness of good report.*

— Publilius Syrus

The great economic depression which began in the United States in 1929 reached New Zealand a year later in the form of a collapse in farm commodity prices. Exports fell by 45% in two years, and national income by 40% in three. Unemployment, normally a few thousands, rose to 50,000 receiving assistance in June 1931, and peaked to nearly 80,000 in September 1933. The Arbitration Court was given power to reduce wages, pensions were reduced, interest rates were cut, and mortgagors' and tenants' relief measures introduced. Salaries of Government officials were cut twice, and intake of staff became negligible.

### COUNCIL WAGE REDUCTION

The matter was raised by Mr G. Murray on 26th January 1931. He gave notice of motion that the wages of employees be reduced by 10% as an alternative to reduction of staff. The chairman (Mr C. J. Talbot) informed the council that the question of a reduction of wages had been talked of by the South Canterbury counties, who had come to an understanding at a private meeting held in Timaru, and that he would move an amendment: (1) that wages should conform as near as possible with the standard of the Levels County, wherein the basis for a labourer is 13/10 a day, or  $1\frac{3}{4}$  per hour; (2) that a 44-hour week only should be worked; (3) that no bonus time be allowed, and that only the actual time worked be paid for; (4) that salaries over £300 should be subject to a 13% reduction on the amount over £300; (5) all such adjustments should take place and operate from 1st April 1931.

A lengthy discussion took place on Mr Murray's motion and also on the chairman's amendment, comparing the effect the cuts would have on different

employees. Mr Talbot stated that under the counties' scheme the saving would be £860, but if overtime were cut out the saving would be £1100. A straight 10% cut would save £990. It was also pointed out that a 13% cut in the engineer's salary over £300 would be only 6%.

It was finally decided to adopt an amendment moved by Mr W. T. Smith, and seconded by Mr H. H. Fisher, that a 10% reduction be made on the wages and salaries of all employees, except the office assistant, such reduction to operate from 1st April, 1931.

#### CENTRAL COMMITTEE ON UNEMPLOYMENT

Meanwhile a letter was received from the mayor of Timaru (Mr W. Angland), suggesting the setting up of a local committee to ascertain the number of unemployed in the district and the work available for them. Th local committee could also appoint a representative on the central committee. Mr Murray said he was not altogether in favour of the scheme. He did not think they should make public what the position was in the county. They were not as likely to have as much unemployment in the county as in Timaru, and men might be sent to the county to find work. The scheme was approved, and Mr J. McCort appointed to represent the council on the central committee.

In April, it was noted that various small works were suitable for being carried out by the unemployment schemes. A particular work was the Cattle Valley highway, on which corners could be taken off, and a stock route formed above the road. A letter was sent to the Main Highways Board, and the settlers, concerning the matter.

#### ECONOMIES EFFECTED

In March 1931, after a discussion on possible economy, it was decided that a committee consisting of Messrs W. T. Smith, F. J. Carter, W. Scott, G. Murray and the chairman should be set up to go into the matter. In April, adopting a report of the committee which recommended drastic measures be taken, the council dismissed fourteen employees, and also decided that the four best horses be retained, and the rest disposed of with the gear, drays, harness and collars, as will not be required. In May the council formed an unemployment committee in Albury consisting of Messrs W. Fraser, D. Fraser and W. Tasman Smith.

#### DEPUTATION FROM TIMARU

On 1st June, says the minutes, a deputation of four gentlemen from the Timaru Central Unemployment Committee waited on the council with a view to the council endeavouring to find work for a number of unemployed from Timaru. It was decided to write to the commissioner, asking that provision be made for men to work their month's quota of work, and then be paid weekly the amount they would earn under the present scheme. It was also decided that a start be made with providing work, and that the plantations at Cave be grubbed for fire breaks; that the Ashwick plantation be offered for work and that the firewood be given to the committee, and later, if possible, the Cattle Valley road work be undertaken.

#### MACKENZIE COUNTY EMPLOYEES

Naturally there was a storm of protest at the drastic retrenchment of fourteen employees decided upon by the council. "Ratepayer", writing to the *Timaru Herald*, said surely this was not the time of the year to be putting men off, especially when the Government is asking local bodies to provide all the employment possible. It was stated that married men with large families, in one or two cases with eight or nine dependents, had been dispensed with. Another correspondent, "Justice", wrote in a similar vein.

The matter was reopened in the May meeting when Mr A. F. Campbell said the council had acted too hurriedly in the matter, and moved that the motion be rescinded. The chairman admitted that the matter had possibly been hurried, and agreed to its being reopened. After lengthy and not too polite discussion, it was finally agreed not to ration the work, as had been suggested by some ratepayers, but to put a shingle gang on the main highway, consisting of four men, two drays and five horses. It was agreed that married men be given preference wherever possible.

#### METHOD OF SELECTION QUESTIONED

At a subsequent meeting Mr G. Murray wanted more enquiry into the selection of unemployed for work, when raising an objection to the system adopted in employing men on relief works. He said that there was a certain type of man who looked upon the scheme as a good opportunity for a soft job, and he considered that more enquiries should be made by the local committee when men were selected. Mr Campbell said it must be the unemployment committee's fault. Mr Smith said the unemployment problem was a large one, and it was difficult to make the scheme fair and just for everyone. He instanced a case where a farmer had taken on a man for six months, but he was dismissed after a few days because the department discovered that he had £100 in the bank. "Why should this man, who had been of a saving disposition, be sacked, when another man on relief work can drive to work in a sedan car?" he asked.

When the suggestion was made by the chairman that it was hard to know what to do with them, and he thought the unemployment committee were only doing their best, discussion on the subject ceased.

#### CHAIRMAN'S HONORARIUM

When the chairman's honorarium of £50 was renewed in May, Mr Talbot said he desired that it be subject to a 10% cut.

#### UNEMPLOYMENT CAMPS

With strong opposition from Mr Geo. Murray that "this unemployment business is rotten to the core, and it is time someone put a stop to it," and that they should carry their swags instead of being provided with transport to and from Timaru, the council decided to establish two unemployment camps. The first camp was at "Pusey", near Cattle Valley, with provision made for thirty men. The second was at Ashwick plantation where twenty men would be found work under similar conditions to those at Cattle Valley. The work would be clearing a plantation, and stacking the wood into piles ready for transport.

Unfortunately there was considerable adverse criticism by the unemployed in Timaru as to the conditions at Cattle Valley, and a boycott was threatened of the scheme altogether. Neither the council nor Mr Jeune accepted the criticism as valid, Mr Jeune saying that he had done everything he possibly could to make conditions good. In the end he announced that the men were given twenty-four hours to fill the camp, otherwise all arrangements would be cancelled.

Speaking some days later to a press reporter, Mr Jeune said that the unemployment camp at Cattle Valley was proving a success. The men were doing excellent work, and from all accounts they appeared to be a very happy family in the camps, and seemed well satisfied with their conditions.

#### APPRECIATION

On 3rd September 1932, Mr Talbot made appreciative reference to the good work done by the unemployed at Cattle Valley. He said the men at Cattle Valley, and also at Ashwick, proved the contention that if the unemployed were given productive work they would show more interest in it. Although the wages were not large, the men appeared to be proud of what they were accomplishing, and were doing a really good job. Mr A. F. Campbell congratulated the men on the splendid work they were doing at Cattle Valley. At the conclusion of the council meeting, an inspection was made of the Cattle Valley road, councillors expressing appreciation of the big improvement effected.

#### TRAFFIC INSPECTOR

The idea of appointing one traffic inspector to cover all of South Canterbury from the Rangitata to the Waitaki with the exception of the Timaru Borough would appear odd today, but in 1931 it was a very serious question, and even debatable from some points of view.

A conference of representatives of local bodies, Waimate Borough, Waimate County, Geraldine County, Temuka Borough, Pleasant Point Town Board district, and the Mackenzie County was held to consider a comprehensive statement that had been prepared by Mr D. Jeune, clerk-engineer to the Mackenzie County Council, who was congratulated on the great amount of work he had done.

Briefly, Mr Jeune suggested: (1) the district should comprise the area from the Rangitata to the Waitaki with the exception of the Timaru Borough; (2) the reasons for the need of an inspector are: (a) to reduce the speeding and overloading of motor vehicles as these two factors are the main cause of the very heavy maintenance costs of roads; (b) to see that all heavy traffic fees are paid regularly, and by-laws fully complied with. It was stated that there were 1900 miles of roads in the area, and at 750 miles per week the inspector could cover some 3000 miles a month. It was assumed that 50% of the roads would have to be traversed. On the above figures it would be seen that the inspector could at least visit them three times a month.

The cost was thought to be £500, though possibly on the low side; a car would have to be purchased through the Main Highways Board; percentages were suggested for contribution by the local bodies, and Temuka should be asked to be the central distributing body. An expression of opinion was sought from the local bodies involved in the scheme.

When the Mackenzie County Council discussed the matter, Mr Jeune said that the council's contribution would be about £50 a year. Mr W. T. Smith said the council lost a good deal of revenue through not having an inspector to check licence fees, and it would pay them to contribute to the scheme. He did not favour supplying the inspector with a car. Mr W. Scott said he could not see the necessity for an inspector, and did not agree that the Mackenzie was losing revenue. There was not the same scope for speeding as in the Levels County, whose council were no doubt keen on the appointment. From Pukaki to Burkes Pass was the only stretch where speeding took place to any degree, and the poundkeeper should be able to meet the requirements.

Mr Smith was of the opinion that the county roads were being rooted up by excessive speeding, and if Mackenzie paid £100 toward the appointment it would be well worth it.

Mr Scott: I hope Mr Smith does not think the inspector will concentrate on our roads to catch speedsters.

Mr Geo. Murray: Surely we do not want to go to any more expense. Our man is quite capable.

Mr Campbell said he had been told in Timaru that there was need for more stringent supervision of heavy traffic lorries in Mackenzie.

After further discussion it was decided, on the motion of the chairman (Mr Talbot), seconded by Mr Smith, that the council approve of the scheme, and contribute their quota when the time arrived. Messrs Murray, Scott and H. H. Fisher voted against the motion.

#### AN AMALGAMATION MOVE

On 7th October 1932, Mr W. Scott moved that the Geraldine, Waimate and Levels county councils be invited to confer on the subject of local body amalgamation. This was approved, and Mr Scott was appointed to make arrangements for a conference. Geraldine and Levels gave their approval. In reporting the conference in January, Mr Talbot said that the idea of the Mackenzie council seemed to be favourably received. Several proposals had been considered, but the one which seemed feasible to him was the amalgamation of the Geraldine and Mackenzie counties, this to incorporate the southern portion of the Levels County; Waimate County to include the southern half of the Levels up to Timaru.

Mr Scott moved that the Mackenzie County Council approve of a scheme of amalgamation with the Geraldine County and portion of Levels County; also that they were prepared to consider Waimate joining the area if they so desired. In seconding the motion, the chairman said it did not commit the council, and a thorough investigation by experts and laymen would be made before anything definite was done. The motion was carried with Mr Campbell dissenting. It was further unanimously decided that the adjoining counties be asked to go into the matter, and provide figures for presentation to a meeting of the councils; also that these counties be asked to approve of the Mackenzie council going into figures dealing with the proposed area of amalgamation. The chairman, Messrs Scott, Carter and the engineer were appointed the committee to make the investigations.

On 24th January 1933, a conference of representatives of the Mackenzie council (five), the Geraldine council (three), the Levels County (two) and

the Waimate County (five), together with the member for Temuka, Mr T. D. Burnett, was held in Timaru with Mr T. B. Garrick, the Levels County chairman, presiding. Among the Waimate delegates was Mr J. Bitchener, M.P. The outcome was that three alternative schemes were reported back to the respective councils: (1) amalgamation of the whole area, (2) amalgamation of Mackenzie and Levels counties, and (3) amalgamation of Levels, Mackenzie and Geraldine with Waimate taking in the southern portion of Levels.

Although many Geraldine councillors favoured the idea, it was decided "That the matter of amalgamating the counties in South Canterbury be left over pending action by the Government in appointing a Commission to go into the whole question affecting local government in New Zealand." Levels council wanted further information from the Mackenzie council who mooted the scheme. It was considered that the Levels was run quite efficiently, but the different nature of Levels and Mackenzie from the point of view of configuration would create great difficulties. "Levels will have to be very careful," was the summing up of the discussion in the news media.

Waimate decided "That the Waimate County Council is of the opinion that the time is not opportune for consideration of the amalgamation of the South Canterbury councils." The chairman, reporting to the Mackenzie council, said that while in Wellington he had seen Colonel J. Pow, secretary of the Counties Association, who had complimented the Mackenzie council on taking the matter up. On the motion of Messrs W. Scott and F. J. Carter it was decided that the Government be urged to take steps to set up the promised commission to investigate local body amalgamation generally, and that a South Canterbury member be included in the commission.

#### A MACKENZIE APPROACH TO LEVELS

Subsequent to the breakdown of the amalgamation move in 1933, the Mackenzie council submitted a novel idea to the Levels County Council for consideration. It was a step-by-step amalgamation of all local authorities to form a South Canterbury region extending from the Rangitata to the Waitaki rivers, and bounded by the Alps and the sea. It was agreed that in this area development of all public works should be co-ordinated towards the most economical method of placing the primary products of the area in the hands of the consumer.

The report on the proposal stated that in the area there were four borough councils, one town board, one hospital board, one highways council, four county councils, one harbour board, one power board, and two river boards, with a total of some eighty members — almost twice as many members as there were members in Parliament. In this group there were five civil engineers, one harbour engineer, and one electrical engineer. There were also six rating clerks.

It was suggested that the amalgamation would be a process of gradual federation. First, the smallest county of the east could amalgamate with the largest county in the west, followed by the northern county, and then the southern. The inclusion of the harbour and electrical authorities would naturally follow. Extensive figures showing savings in personnel and costs were given, and other factors claimed to favour the move. It also states that Fairlie was the geographical centre of the combined area, and therefore should

be the combined headquarters. Administrative buildings were already provided, and there could be a small collecting office in Timaru. Rating and administration were also dealt with in some detail. The Levels County Council unanimously opposed the scheme, and therefore it was abandoned.

### SOUTH ISLAND COUNTIES ASSOCIATION

Amalgamation and unity must have been an obsession with the Mackenzie County Council about this time. With a view to securing unanimity in the promotion of the interests of South Island counties, all counties were circulated, suggesting that a meeting be held in Christchurch to consider the advisability of forming a South Island branch of the New Zealand Counties Association. Thirty-six counties were in favour, two approved of the idea, seven did not favour, two "received" the circular, and two did not reply.

"It is not suggested that the proposed South Island branch should in any way affect the cordial relations which at present exist between the North and South Islands," said the chairman, Mr George Murray. However, the meeting was held and about sixty attended. Most of the delegates were of the opinion that the present system adequately met the needs of the South Island, and that the formation of such a body would tend to bring a feeling of the North Island versus the South Island into the discussion of county matters. Mr C. J. Talbot, who was present, said there was no question of forming a South Island association, but a South Island branch of the present association. Among the many speakers was the Hon. W. H. McIntyre, M.L.C., of Buller, who opposed the motion. The proposal was overwhelmingly defeated.

### FIRE-FIGHTING COUNCILLORS

When the Mackenzie County Council, in session on 4th August 1931, received a telephone message that the Winscombe plantation owned by Mr E. Gillingham was ablaze, and that there was danger to a neighbouring homestead, they discovered that there were no county employees available, and the chairman (Mr C. J. Talbot), on the suggestion of Mr G. Murray, adjourned the meeting and the council formed themselves into a voluntary fire brigade. It was thought that Winscombe, which is about three miles from Fairlie, would be out of the local brigade area, but it was not long before the bell sounded, work was stopped, and about forty men, including all councillors, were speeding in cars to the scene of the outbreak.

Dense columns of smoke enveloped the trees, the fire having started in the western end of Mr Gillingham's land, and, swept by the strong wind at the time, the flames advanced towards the Winscombe railway station. At one stage the fire jumped across the road to the left, and started to devour a small corner of Mr A. Grant's plantation, in which were growing ten acres of valuable English trees. Fortunately Mr W. Close, captain of the Fairlie fire brigade, Mr Talbot and others soon stamped the ground black with the aid of branches secured from nearby trees, and with chemicals provided by the brigade.

The trees in the plantation were all fairly old, and it was thought that the burning of the undergrowth would do more good than harm. It was fortunate that men were available, for had the fire been left to continue unobstructed the dryness of the country might have allowed for more serious consequences.

The question of providing fire breaks in the council's plantations had been discussed prior to the fire, and it was decided that owing to the danger at that time of the year it would be desirable to make breaks immediately.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1924

##### MR OWEN MORLEY HOPE

A letter of congratulation was sent to Mr Hope, a former councillor, on his appointment as an assistant engineer on the Arapuni hydro-electric power scheme.

##### WOODBANK COAL MINE

Mr J. H. Smillie was granted permission to erect a loading bank on the roadside at the Woodbank Coal Mine, Albury.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1925

##### FAIRLIE - PUKAKI ROAD

The Mount Cook Motor Company was asked to use a lighter car during the winter months.

##### A BOOK ON SOUTH CANTERBURY

An application for a donation of £75 to the South Canterbury Development League towards the cost of publishing a book boosting South Canterbury was declined.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1926

##### ALBURY RIDING BRIDGES

A tender of £205/10/- by Hamlyn Bros for the erection of three small bridges in the Albury Riding was accepted.

##### RIBBONWOOD CREEK BRIDGE

A tender of £580 from Fred Trott to erect a traffic bridge over Ribbonwood Creek near Sherwood Downs was accepted.

##### DAYLIGHT SAVING

In March 1926, in response to a letter from the "N.Z. Sports Protection League" dealing with "daylight saving", the chairman said that as far as the country districts were concerned, they were very much against the proposal. The farmer always made as much use of daylight as he possibly could. If the clock was put on an hour, it would be a hardship to country people. The council did not endorse the proposal.

##### SANITARY SERVICE FOR FAIRLIE

In May it was decided to provide a compulsory sanitary service for Fairlie, a sealed pan system, pans to be purchased by the residents, charges per annum for weekly service to be £2/10/- and fortnightly £1/15/-. A comprehensive by-law had to be made for the purpose. From thirteen applicants, Mr L. W. A. Gardner was appointed sanitary officer.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1927

##### WEKAS

The South Canterbury Acclimatisation Society provided six wekas for liberation on Tekapo Island (Motu Ariki).

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1928

### RAINCLIFF CREEK BRIDGE

A tender of £400 by Fred Trott of Geraldine was accepted for the erection of a light traffic bridge over Raincliff Creek.

### THE FATE OF GRUMBLERS

"The grumblers should be planted in the graveyard," wrote a member of the cemetery committee to the council. "It's only a matter of time," commented Mr J. McCort.

### HOSPITAL BOARD LEVY

The levy for the year was £2754/12/4, an increase of £293/14/6 over the previous year. A remit was sent to the counties conference advocating the fixing of hospital levies on the basis of one half population and one half on capital value.

### WOMEN JUSTICES

Mr T. D. Burnett, M.P., asked whether the council thought it desirable that there should be a woman J.P. in the county. The council replied that it did not consider it necessary at the present time.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1929

### MISS E. M. BURT

Miss Burt resigned as assistant clerk after ten years service. Miss H. J. Allan was appointed to fill the vacancy, but she resigned the following year, some time later to become county clerk to the Levels County Council from 1932 to 1938.

### LAKE TEKAPO ISLAND

Mr Fred Trott requested permission to land on Motu Ariki to erect fireplaces and a rustic shelter, and gave an undertaking to protect the property. This was granted and Mr Trott appointed honorary ranger to take care of the property.

### MR D. STEVENSON

The council regretted the death of one of its valued servants, Mr D. Stevenson, who had been a ranger and patrolman for twenty-three years. It conveyed to his relatives its sincere sympathy and voted one month's salary to the deceased.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1931

### HAWKES BAY EARTHQUAKE

The chairman referred to the disaster which had overtaken Hawkes Bay, and the great loss of life which had resulted in Napier and Hastings through the earthquake of 3rd February 1931. A relief fund was opened with the council heading the list with £100, followed by £21 from council employees.

### CURRENT WAGES

The scale of wages per day adopted as from 27th June was: Labourers, 12/6; teamsters, 13/-; patrolmen, 13/6; shingle ganger, 13/6; gangers, 14/-; Leyland driver, 14/-; six-wheeler driver, 14/-; nine-speed Ford driver, 13/6; tractor drivers, 13/6; grader drivers, 14/-.



MACKENZIE COUNTY COUNCIL, 1890  
From Left to Right: Capt. Francis Hayter, R.N., Andrew Cowan, J. J. Milne, S. R. Dickson, R. L. Banks (Engineer), F. R. Gillingham, George Alves, Seated: John McGregor (Chairman).



MACKENZIE COUNTY COUNCILLORS, 1919

Back Row: L. J. McGregor, Geo. Murray, R. L. Banks (Clerk and Engineer), W. Black (Inset).  
Middle Row: W. Tas Smith, E. Macdonald, (Chairman), Miss E. M. Burt (Assistant Clerk), J.  
McLean. Front Row: R. Irving, R. Leitch.



MACKENZIE COUNTY COUNCIL, 1923-1926

Back Row: Miss E. M. Burt (Assistant Clerk), R. L. Banks (Clerk and Engineer). Middle Row: A.  
F. Campbell, W. S. Rae (Assistant Engineer), H. N. Hope, C. J. Talbot (Chairman), J. Moffatt,  
J. J. Page. Front Row: E. Saunders, J. McCort, F. H. Buckley.



MACKENZIE COUNTY COUNCIL, 1929-1932

From Left: J. Burt (Office Assistant), B. Smart (Assistant Clerk), H. H. Fisher, F. J. Carter, T. J. Seay, C. J. Talbot (Chairman), W. Tas. Smith, A. F. Campbell, W. Scott, G. Murray, D. Jeune (Engineer and Clerk).



MACKENZIE COUNTY COUNCIL, 1944-1947

Standing From Left: B. N. Murray, Miss M. E. O'Neill (Cashier), T. Moorhouse (County Engineer and Clerk), Miss J. M. Dick (Assistant County Clerk), W. B. Trotter, Miss M. C. Edwards (Typist), J. L. McKerchar.

Sitting From Left: J. Allan, A. B. Mackenzie, C. V. Kirke (Chairman), P. J. Keenan, T. E. Besley.



MACKENZIE COUNTY COUNCIL, 1958

Sitting From Left: Crs. John O'Neill, W. A. MacIntosh, Miss R. Williams (Office Staff), Cr. James O'Neill, Miss M. O'Neill (Office Staff), Mr J. Somers (County Clerk), Mr C. V. Kirke (Chairman).

Standing From Left: Crs. W. B. Trotter, J. Scott, J. Allan, H. R. Welsh (Foreman), G. R. Milward (Consulting Engineer), Cr. W. Simpson.



MACKENZIE COUNTY COUNCIL, 1974-1977

Back Row: B. J. Dwyer (County Clerk), Crs. D. W. Moyes, B. L. Chapman, J. Galwey, J. Murphy, J. R. Simpson.

Front Row: Crs. B. J. O'Neill, M. G. H. Murray (Chairman), W. D. Belcher (Overseer), Cr. A. G. Braddick, J. R. Fougere (Consulting Engineer), Cr. A. B. Smith.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1932

### GEORGE BODDYE

Appreciation was expressed of the long and faithful service to the council by Ranger Boddye, and regret that he found retirement necessary.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1933

### PAYMENT OF FARMERS' RATES

A suggestion from the Stratford County Council that all counties unite on urging the Government to pay all farmers' rates for the current year was received.

### RATES TO 31ST MARCH 1934

These were fixed at hospital rate, 5/16th of a penny; general rate, 7/8th; Fairlie Fire Brigade, 3/10th; Fairlie water rate 1d and special charges, and Ashwick race 10/- on original sections and special charges — all on the unimproved value of the land.

# 8

## From the Depression to the War

### LOANS FOR BRIDGES

On 5th April 1935, a report on light traffic bridges in the county was considered and it was agreed to raise a loan of £10,000 for replacements. Because of various manifold advantages, the report recommended, if replacement was decided upon, the reinforced concrete bridge in the centre of the road provided with ample width for one-way traffic, and capable of carrying all classes of traffic. The bridges proposed to be built on the main highways were: Pareora Back Road, Mona Vale (at school), Cox's, Upper Mount Nessing, Plantation road (two), Ashwick (over Opihi), Upper Tengawai, and Rutherford's Road, a total of 870 feet without including two bridges in the Tekapo Riding.

The costs would be in the vicinity of £9687, and further sums of £2500 and £3000 would be required for Tekapo. This was stated to be just an outline of county requirements, and far from a complete record of requirements, as the very large culvert replacement problem had yet to be dealt with.

On 30th May, the council decided to apply to the Local Government Loans Board for sanction to borrow £10,000 or such larger sum up to £20,000 as was deemed expedient for the purpose of renewing and replacing various timber bridges throughout the county. The extra £10,000 was to include the Tekapo bridge.

In a statement by the engineer, Mr D. Jeune, on 14th September 1936, the day before a loan proposal went to a vote of the ratepayers, he pointed out that there were some thirty bridges on roads, other than highways, that were in urgent need of rebuilding, and in fact were unsafe for anything but the lightest traffic. The Loans Board had agreed that the sum of £10,000 would be the amount to raise first, with a sum of £6000 to be raised later if required. The new bridges would be in the centre of the road, and capable of carrying all traffic. Nearly all the light traffic bridge in the county were included in the schedule, but naturally the most urgent cases would be dealt with first. Mr Talbot issued a statement that the expenditure was necessary to reduce the heavy expenditure on bridge maintenance. The old bridges were becoming dangerous and a menace to the travelling public. The interest and sinking fund would be less than the cost of repairs, so that the rates would not be increased by the loan. The proposal to raise the bridge loan of £16,000 was carried by 457 votes to 149.

Mr Jeune said that all the old bridges needed repairing, but this would only be of a temporary nature, as they would have to be dismantled in a year

or two, and if the work were carried out by the council, the men engaged would be paid out of loan money, and the wages saved from the general account, thus helping the financial position. In December the council laid down a definite policy along these lines. It decided that the construction of new concrete bridges should be carried out by the council's own staff. The points considered were: (1) a number of men were removed from the general payroll, (2) council plant could be hired under the loan programme and hire rates paid for it, (3) materials would cost probably less than through contractors, (4) small useful plant would be obtained from the loan account after completion of the work. The chairman (Mr Talbot) and Mr P. E. Neilson were appointed a committee to accept tenders for material and plant.

#### DUKE OF GLOUCESTER'S VISIT

On Tuesday, 15th January 1935, the Duke of Gloucester paid a short visit to Fairlie; in fact it was described as a brief stop. The main street and shops were decorated with greenery and bunting. Some time before the arrival of the Duke, a large crowd gathered at the war memorial and along both sides of the main street. Forty returned soldiers paraded and formed a guard of honour. The Mackenzie pipe band was in attendance, and about 300 school children were marshalled for the occasion. The Duke and party were welcomed by the county chairman, Mr Geo. Murray, and others. During the time the Duke was inspecting the children, a large crowd gathered round his car to view his two terriers which he took with him on the trip.

Whilst in the Mackenzie country, the Duke of Gloucester laid the foundation stone of the Church of the Good Shepherd at Lake Tekapo. The service, which was described as lengthy, was commenced before the arrival of the Duke from the Hermitage, and conducted by the Bishop of Christchurch, Dr Campbell West West-Watson, assisted by several clergy. The Duke is said to have been attired in a light lounge suit, and hatless.

#### DAMAGES AWARDED AGAINST COUNCIL

A claim for £5000 damages by Mary Barton Amy Shaw of Fairlie against the chairman, councillors and inhabitants of the Mackenzie County was heard from 8th to 10th May 1935 before Mr Justice Johnston and a special jury in the Supreme Court at Timaru. The claim arose out of an accident in which Mrs Shaw's husband, William George Shaw, was killed on 6th November 1934 while a passenger on a motor vehicle owned by the defendant. Mrs Shaw was stated to be the mother of ten children.

Mrs Shaw claimed that her husband was being conveyed in a motor lorry provided for the purpose by the defendant to do work at Cattle Valley, and that while travelling up a steep incline on the Mount Michael Road, the brakes of the lorry failed, as a result of which the lorry backed down the incline, got out of control, overturned, and fell on her husband, inflicting severe head injuries, from which he died. The defendant was alleged to be guilty of negligence on seven counts relating to the lorry. The defendant denied that the plaintiff and her children had suffered damage through the accident, and that the cause of the accident was due to the ruckstell axle jumping into neutral and leading to a loss of braking capacity. All reasonable care to keep the vehicle in a good state of repair to travel on the public highway had always been taken.

It took the special jury five and a half hours to award damages of £2500, one-third to the widow and two-thirds to the children. His Honour awarded costs to plaintiff according to scale.

#### LAND FOR AN AERODROME

At the council meeting of 4th September 1935, the chairman (Mr Talbot) said that Mr W. Scott had offered the council some land for an aerodrome at Fairlie. Certain fencing would have to be done, but he understood the land was offered rent free. He thought, however, that something should be paid for the use of it. It was decided to ask the Aviation Department to have the area inspected as soon as possible. The engineer said he had been informed that a proposal was under way to have a sixteen-seater aeroplane waiting at Auckland, which would land tourists at the Franz Josef Glacier three and a half hours after they arrived in Auckland. From the glacier it was proposed to extend the flight over Milford Sound, and later make a landing at Fairlie. From Fairlie the tourists would then be motored to the Hermitage. It was not thought that a satisfactory ground could ever be provided at the Hermitage because of climatic conditions.

On 6th December, a divided council discussed the question of the landing ground at Fairlie. On the casting vote of the chairman, the council agreed that an aerodrome was necessary at Fairlie, and that it should take steps to obtain one. It was further decided to advise Mr Scott that the price asked for his ground was too high, and that the council was inviting offers of a ground. In the meantime the Aviation Department had inspected Mr Scott's property, and said that in view of the desirability of an aerodrome in Fairlie the site was approved. Mr W. R. Davison said he did not think that an aerodrome was a profitable proposition for the council, and should be taken up by other authorities. A letter to the press expressed astonishment that the council should take steps to establish an aerodrome at the expense of the ratepayers, and to spend a large sum of its reserve money to purchase land, from which it was admitted no revenue would be derived.

A further discussion took place in February 1936. A notice of motion by Mr W. R. Davison to rescind the decision that an aerodrome was necessary was opposed by the chairman and Messrs G. Murray, J. Allan and A. B. Mackenzie, and supported by Messrs Davison, P. Kidd, A. F. Campbell and P. E. Neilson, and then defeated on the casting vote of the chairman, who said, "I will give my casting vote to leave things as they are this time." In March the position was still unaltered when a motion by Mr Neilson, to the effect that in the event of an aerodrome being established they should get the necessary money from the Mortgage Corporation through the Loans Board, thus giving the ratepayers the opportunity to vote on the question, was lost by 4 votes to 3.

Stony silence seemed to follow when the Mount Cook Tourist Company, on 2nd May 1936, established an aerodrome at Birch Hill Flat, a few miles south of the Hermitage. The ground was officially declared open by Mr David Barnes, member for Waitaki, who deputised for the Minister of Tourists and Publicity, Hon. Frank Langstone. There were many apologies read out at the opening, including one from the Mackenzie County Council.

## TEKAPO RABBIT BOARD

At long last, in September 1935, a rabbit board was established in the Mackenzie County. This was the Tekapo Rabbit Board. A committee was appointed to canvass the district for signatures to a petition to be presented to the Minister of Agriculture (the Hon. Charles Edward de la Barca Macmillan, in the Forbes ministry), asking for permission to establish a rabbit board at Lake Tekapo. The area embraced all the country between the Pukaki River and Lake Pukaki, and the Tasman River in the west, the Tasman and Murchison glaciers in the north, and the Godley River, Lake Tekapo and Tekapo River on the east and south.

## GORSE MENACE

In October 1935, representatives of almost every county in both Canterbury and South Canterbury, from Banks Peninsula to the Waitaki River, as well as the assistant director of agriculture (Mr A. H. Cockayne), and representatives of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry Department, Unemployment Board, Lands Department, and the Canterbury Progress League met in Ashburton to discuss the alarming spread of gorse in the province, and particularly in the foothills, where it was proving a definite menace to pastoral land.

The conference, which was called by the Waimate County Council, was attended by fifty delegates who were unanimous that something would have to be done to deal with the gorse. A resolution was passed, drawing the attention of the Government to the position, and a committee was set up to go more fully into details. The committee appointed to draw up a comprehensive scheme for presentation to the Government were Messrs H. B. S. Johnstone (Waimate), C. J. Talbot (Mackenzie), J. Deans (Malvern) D. J. Morrow (Ashburton) and C. B. Thacker (Akaroa).

## GLEN LYON ROAD

On Monday, 20th April 1936, members of the Mackenzie County Council paid a visit of inspection to the Glen Lyon Road at Ohau, where thirty unemployed men were engaged for three years in cutting a thoroughfare around the rock and shingle hillside bordering on the lake. Those who made the trip were not only shown a difficult piece of work well done, but a route from which the most renowned scenic lake in the Mackenzie country's famous group would be viewed to best advantage. The road, which was hewn out of the hillside, in some places banked up with neat stonework, and in some parts a sheer drop into the lake, starts from its edge. The height of Lake Ohau above sea level is given as 1720 feet, 13 miles long, with an average width of 3 miles and an area of 39 square miles. The greatest width is about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

By the new road four Mackenzie settlers had access to between 150,000 and 200,000 acres. Mr J. W. Preston's property comprised 104,000 acres in its lease, with an additional 12,000 acres of forest reserve set aside for possible future tree planting. Of the total, however, only 47,000 acres consists of grassland, that is, tussock and snow grass.

When the new road leaves the lake to journey inland, it continues along the hillside, with the riverbed of the Dobson below, and the precipitous and ruggedly-colourful slopes of the Barrier Range on the other side. Each of the first two miles took the thirty men six months to make, and the remaining ten

miles were formed in about five months, which, for road-building under real backblock conditions, is considered to be almost a record. The camp was open only during the summer months, as winter conditions would have severely hampered the work. The bus with the council party was the first large passenger vehicle over the road, and even though there was sufficient roadway skilful driving was required.

The party was entertained at lunch by Mr and Mrs J. W. Preston. Mr C. J. Talbot, in a speech, thanked the Prestons for their hospitality and made reference to the completion of the road. He said that whatever wages the men employed had been paid, they had worked hard indeed. Although the men had perhaps been employed in the camp in distressing circumstances, they had taken pride in their work. He added that the road was largely paid for out of fourths.

There was a delightful climax to the day's inspection. On the return journey the councillors inspected two recently erected bridges over the Twizel River. Members of the Waimate County Council were also on a tour of inspection, and stayed overnight at Takapo House. They were the honoured guests of the Mackenzie County Council for dinner.

#### MACKENZIE COUNTY AFFORESTATION

Mr H. B. S. Johnstone, chairman of the Waimate County Council, when speaking at Takapo House, where Waimate councillors were entertained for dinner by their Mackenzie counterparts, said that the Mackenzie County had become fairly well known for its successful development of afforestation. An account of some of the reserves at that time, May 1936, gives an idea of progress made in this direction. Taking forty different reserves into consideration, the Mackenzie County had 7350 acres of plantation reserves, of which 10% had been planted. Some of the mature trees were being utilised, and during the previous year the council cut 8000 super feet of timber, and sold firewood at 8/- and 9/- a cord to the value of £200.

#### BURKES PASS

The plantations at Burkes Pass proper comprised 79 acres, which had been planted between 1920 and 1922. The soil was described as generally poor, and the elevation 2200 feet above sea level. What probably accounted for the healthy state of the plantation was a rainfall of about fifty inches annually. The tree varieties were corsican pine, larch, pinus ponderosa, and scopulorum, and, to protect the trees from fire, breaks had been carefully prepared.

#### LONG CUTTING AT BURKES PASS

This consisted of 58 acres, all planted on a fairly steep slope, and on thin soil lying over rock. In addition to the varieties in the higher plantation, douglas fir and larch were both growing well, and here were firebreaks also.

#### MACKENZIE BASIN

Immature plantations in the Mackenzie County totalled 517 acres, and of that area 298 were within the Mackenzie basin. During the trip to Glen Lyon, the councillors saw other areas of trees at Tekapo, on Tekapo Island and at Pukaki. The first was one of the most important in the county, containing

about 70 acres, at an elevation of about 2500 feet, on thin, poor soil. Helped by a rainfall of about 25 inches, the trees were growing rapidly, but the best specimens were found under the shelter of Mount John. On the island in the lake, 46 acres had been planted.

#### EDWARDS CREEK

In a reserve of 564 acres, 30 acres had been planted on a site which Mr C. T. Sando, Bach. Forestry Sc., defined in a special report as most unsuitable because of a poor, stony soil of morainic formation. Even though the trees were of uneven size owing to replacements, progress had been made in spite of the additional handicaps presentd by an altitude of 2400 feet and a rainfall of less than 30 inches.

#### TASMAN AND PUKAKI

There was a 102-acre plantation at Tasman, and another of 50 acres at Pukaki, but no further mention is made of them.

#### CAVE HILLSIDE

In a general summary, it was said that there were between 200 and 300 acres of mature plantations in the county, most of which consisted of *Pinus insignis*. Of the immature plantations, one that could not be overlooked was an area of 82 acres on the hillside near Cave. The soil was for the most part clay, and even though gorse was firmly established when planting began in 1927, the trees had won the battle and were well grown. Douglas fir, redwood and macrocarpa were included, and noteworthy was the success of *eucalyptus viminalis*. Success had not attended the redwoods, and nearly all those plants had failed.

#### BOX MAKING INDUSTRY

Mr Sando considered that where the timber from the county could probably find a profitable market in the future would be the box-making industry. Hitherto that avenue had not been developed, and Timaru and other parts of South Canterbury would seem to offer a market which awaited development. No attempt had been made in the county to enter the box and casing field, which was the chief market for the exotic mills of Canterbury. It should be possible for a mill at Fairlie to obtain the whole of the casing business centred about Timaru, on terms as least as favourable as those for the Ashburton mills.

#### DOWNLANDS WATER SUPPLY

Consideration of an important water supply scheme for the farm downlands of South Canterbury was first mooted by Mr Thomas David Burnett, M.P. for Temuka from 1919 to 1941. In a published article dated July 1935, he pointed out that the Tengawai River, with a catchment area going back to Mackenzie Pass, Rollesby Valley and Lockhart's Stream, flowed through a limestone gorge about one mile above Albury Park homestead. Not only were the sides of the gorge rockbound, but the river actually ran over a greywhacke reef, so that there was no underground soakage or loss.

He made six points in favour of the scheme, the first being that it would supply the urgent needs of 87,000 acres of farm land, water in every paddock. He said he would invite to a public meeting in Timaru, the first week in September, representatives of the Mackenzie County Council, Levels County

Council, Pleasant Point Town Board, Timaru Borough Council, farmers, farmers' wives, and everyone who is sincerely anxious to make contact between workless men and healthy, sane development works, making for the good of South Canterbury. In October, the Minister of Public Works, the Hon. John Bitchener (Forbes Government) released a full report on the proposals. In the meantime a body called the Downland Water Supply Investigation Committee operated from the Public Works office in Temuka.

#### MACKENZIE COUNTY CAUTION

At a council meeting on 5th December 1936, Mr C. J. Talbot stated, "We must in duty bound take our share of the responsibility connected with the scheme. It appears that it will be a matter of education to get the settlers themselves to realise the possibilities of it." He gave an assurance that neither he nor Mr P. Kidd, who had represented the council in the meetings, would commit the ratepayers to anything.

On 7th November 1936, Mr Kidd, who had represented the council in a deputation to the Minister of Public Works (the Hon. R. Semple in the Savage Government), regarding the Tengawai water supply scheme, reported that he thought that a body would be set up to control the scheme. He was entirely in favour of the Government giving £100,000 free for its promotion.

In December, at a meeting of the investigating committee, Mr Talbot said that the Levels, Geraldine and Mackenzie counties were quite averse to paying the guarantee of £7000 originally proposed. On a recent visit, Mr Semple had indicated that the Government might be winning to take over the whole operation of the scheme. He urged the committee to agree to this, as the Public Works Department had a full staff available, and would be in a position to make the operation more effective and better every way.

#### OPPOSITION FROM ALBURY RESIDENTS

Apparently Mr F. W. McIlwrick and other residents of the Albury district had said that the Tengawai River fell so low in really dry years that the flow at the gorge would not be sufficient to maintain service to the Downlands water supply area. Mr T. G. Beck, resident engineer of the Public Works Department at Temuka, said that for Mr McIlwrick to be right it would be necessary for the water to leave the gorge by percolation or by subterranean channels. From the geographical formation of the country that was almost impossible, but the question could be definitely settled by simultaneous gauging of the flow at both ends of the gorge, a measure which it was proposed to adopt.

In regard to fears expressed by farmers below the dam that their wells and springs along the river would suffer by the diversion of water for the scheme, Mr Beck said that the amount needed for reticulation was so extremely small a fraction of the average yield of the stream that its effect on the underground water level would leave it undisturbed.

#### THREE SPRINGS AS A SOURCE

In May a report was released that a full investigation had been made into the advisability of using Three Springs at Kimbell for the source of the Downlands water supply instead of the Tengawai River. This investigation had been carried out by Mr Beck during the previous few months. The eminent

suitability of Three Springs as a source of potable water was recognised, and the springs visited. The extra distance would be ten and a half miles. The demand for water, both for stock and domestic purposes, between Three Springs and the Tengawai River would be lower than that for the bulk of the area coming within the scheme. There was no indication that Fairlie desired a high pressure water supply, and, finally, in all probability Fairlie could be supplied more cheaply by the utilisation of a water race passing through the town. After dealing at some length with the objection of Albury residents, Mr Beck concluded, "My opinion is that the Tengawai gorge source is completely dependable from every point of view."

#### SPECIAL WATER AREA

A meeting was called in the Oddfellows Hall, Albury, on 31st July 1937, when the county chairman, Mr W. R. Davison, explained the scheme. Apparently the meeting could not have been too convincing, as in August Mr P. Kidd gave notice of motion to the effect that a small area from Whitemans Road to the county boundary should be declared a special water area. The chairman moved pro forma that the whole area affected be declared a special water area. The portion of the county affected seemed to be divided into two parts. Above Whitemans Road ratepayers concerned had forwarded 34 written objections, while those below the road were strongly in favour of the proposal. There were 119 ratepayers altogether, but in the northern area, as 34 out of 82 had objected, the chairman could not see that the council could do anything. Mr Talbot said that over the whole area there were only 34 objections in 119. The newspaper caption reporting the meeting was: "Water Supply Area — Albury Excluded".

The following month it was decided that as there had been 34 objections from the upper area, the council would not feel justified in including the whole area in the proposal. The new area was therefore defined as from Whitemans Road to the Cave, with the addition of two sections above Whitemans Road. A special meeting was called to constitute the Downlands (Mackenzie) Water Race District, and a special roll of ratepayers was prepared. The special meeting was held and the scheme passed accordingly. In addition, a petition from a number of ratepayers asking to be included was passed on to the Downlands Investigation Committee.

#### WATER BECOMES AVAILABLE

In August 1940 the first water became available, and by 1941 the scheme was almost completed, except for 22,000 acres in the Waimate County which were reticulated in 1946-47 — after the war.

#### FAIRLIE TOWN HALL PROJECT

On 9th October 1936, the council decided to approach Mr David Barnes, M.P., about obtaining a subsidy for the erection of a Coronation Hall in Fairlie at an estimated cost of £4000. Mr C. C. Knight, who had a lease of Aorangi Hall, said he had spent a considerable amount of money on the venture, but

had heard rumours that a new hall was likely to be built. Mr Knight was advised, now that Aorangi Hall was in good order, to withhold further improvements in the meantime. Mr P. E. Neilson said he thought that the chance of obtaining a hall with a coronation subsidy should not be missed.

In June 1937, a public meeting was held at which it was stated that, with the exception of Mount Nessing and Albury, no district in the Mackenzie County had a hall. It was unanimously decided to ask the council to go into the matter. The council forthwith sanctioned a report being made. The July council meeting excluded Tekapo and Albury from having an interest in the hall, and also ruled out the appropriation of council funds to the cost. The engineer said a loan of £6000 would be required, and gave figures to show that the cost on the capital value of the Fairlie and Opuha ridings would be £360.

No objections from the Fairlie and Opuha ridings having been received, in August it was decided to raise a loan of £6000 to acquire a site and erect a county hall. In the meantime the newly formed Fairlie Citizens' Association gave unanimous support for the proposal. In September provisional plans were completed as required by the Loans Board. The question was then left in abeyance until the high-pressure water scheme was out of the way, and then, the following year, in August 1938, the question of buying Aorangi Hall was discussed at a mentioned figure of £2500. It was decided that the building of a new hall should be looked at again.

Albury ratepayers were still restless about the idea. In December they held a public meeting and asked that Albury be excluded. However, the whole scheme fizzled out when, in January, the council was told that no Government subsidy would be available if the hall was built with loan money. The chairman (Mr W. R. Davison) said he thought the matter should be allowed to lapse for two years.

The next move came in June 1939, when forty citizens in Fairlie asked the council to consider purchasing Aorangi Hall as a solution to the deadlock. The council then decided to approach the trustees for terms of a lease. In October, the trustees, hitherto opposed to leasing the building, decided that in view of the need for a hall during the war, they would negotiate with the council, the latter to make alterations and improvements as long as they were approved by the trustees. A lease was arranged at 30/- a week for three years.

After the lease had expired on 9th July 1943, the advice of an architect was sought as to the value of the building, the cost of putting it into order for present-day requirements, and the approximate cost of a new hall, the cost of the report to be in the vicinity of £10. The architect was Mr Rule of Timaru, who gave a brief preliminary report in which he said he could not favour in any way the taking over of Aorangi Hall. At that point the council did not think it worth while going deeply into the question of costs and prices.

In August 1944, Mr B. N. Murray stated he considered the county was worthy of a decent hall, and that arrangements should be set in train for a new hall in Fairlie. The chairman, Mr C. V. Kirke, suggested that the matter should be held over until after the war. The trustees were then informed that matters should remain as they were for the duration of the war.

### A FINANCIAL CRISIS

What appears now to have been near panic measures arose from what, at the time, loomed up as a serious financial crisis. Early in 1937, it was reported that greatly increased expenditure was incurred through higher levies payable to the South Canterbury hospital and harbour boards, and a new scale of wages fixed by the Arbitration Court. In addition the council lost road mileage which was given over to the Highways Board. In pointing out these facts, Mr P. Kidd moved that the council consider a reorganisation and reduction of council staff. In discussing the financial state of the council, Mr C. J. Talbot said that an increase in rates was unavoidable.

Meanwhile, complaints that five men had been dismissed were replied to by the engineer, Mr D. Jeune. He said they were only required to stand down temporarily, and the action had been taken because the work on which they had been engaged had been completed, and there would be ample harvesting work in the district during the following few weeks. One wonders whether he had his tongue in his cheek when he made this statement.

Matters came to a head in March, when a scheme drawn up by the engineer was adopted by the council. The object of the scheme was to effect a saving of £5000 on the following year's working. Its operation would involve the dismissal of sixteen men out of a total of thirty-four from 1st April 1937, and a special rate increase of 1/16th of a penny on the capital value to meet the higher levies of the hospital and harbour boards. It was expected that four of the men dismissed would find employment on the council's extensive bridge building work. For the crushers, eight men were to be retained, and two for the graders. A county gang of four would also be kept. The three patrolmen in the different ridings, who cost £700 a year, would be dismissed. A mechanic and blacksmith would be retained, and expected to do patching work with a lorry in their spare time. A special motion empowering the engineer to use his own discretion as to what men should be retained, and another motion by Mr P. E. Neilson, reinstating for the time being the five men who had been asked to stand down, were moved.

Mr W. R. Davison moved that the whole council staff with the exception of Miss B. W. Smart and Miss W. Dick, the foreman and two graders be stood down for six weeks, and then only twenty be re-engaged. When asked if this included the engineer, he said it did. The motion was lost. He also moved that the increase in rates be deleted from the scheme. This was seconded by Mr G. Murray, supported by Mr J. Allan, and lost. When the motion approving the scheme was put and carried, Mr Murray desired that his vote against the increase in rates be recorded.

### ANOTHER AMALGAMATION PROPOSAL

Before a meeting of representatives of the four counties in South Canterbury on Monday, 15th March 1937, at Fairlie, the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Hon. W. E. Parry, proposed the formation of one local body to take the place of Waimate, Levels, Mackenzie and Geraldine county councils and the Pleasant Point Town Board. The minister said that this was more or less a starting point for the consideration of amalgamation, rather than a hard and fast plan which the bodies concerned would be forced to put into operation. He had plans under consideration by which it was proposed to reduce the

counties in the South Island from about fifty to twenty. He hinted that some steps toward amalgamation were bound to be taken, and if matters were not taken into hand by the local authorities affected then ministerial action would be necessary. After a lengthy meeting, it was decided to convene a conference of county councils in Timaru to discuss amalgamation.

Apparently the meeting was held and the delegates decided that there should be two counties, and a committee was set up to fix the boundaries and expedite the matter generally. The Chamber of Commerce described it as an extraordinary state of affairs, and contended that the minister had stampeded them into a decision. The Fairlie branch of the Farmers Union objected, and said a referendum should be taken before anything was done. Newspaper correspondence was voluminous, and a *Herald* leader said that the obvious duty of all councillors was to consult the electors before committing any county to a policy that may not be acceptable to the majority of electors.

Fifty-three ratepayers of Levels County at an indignation meeting in The Little Playhouse entered an emphatic protest against the action of representatives of the four counties deciding to amalgamate into two large counties without first consulting the ratepayers whom they represented. The meeting passed a resolution opposing the amalgamation until legislation had been passed, and until the ratepayers had been given an opportunity to express an opinion on the matter by referendum. A deputation was appointed to wait on the Levels County in support of the protest.

"Before the present proposals were carried too far, it is somewhat surprising that the matter was not brought before the Mackenzie County Council," said Mr W. R. Davison, an Albury Riding member of the council, and also the convener of a meeting of protest. What was described as probably the largest meeting of its kind ever held in the district, Mackenzie County ratepayers decided "That as the Minister of Internal Affairs has not stated what benefits will accrue from county amalgamation in South Canterbury, this meeting of Mackenzie ratepayers strongly protests against any form of amalgamation which is effected without a referendum of the ratepayers." A motion was passed requiring the resolution to be forwarded to the minister through the member for the district (Mr David Barnes), and to the four county councils. Both motions were carried on voices without dissent. Mr W. Scott was in the chair.

In May 1937, the Levels County Council, after receiving a deputation, decided to endeavour to have the resolution passed at the conference of county councils rescinded. Mr C. J. Talbot drew fireworks from the *Timaru Herald* when he stated he wished to go to the conference with a free mind, that he would not be bound by any resolution passed by the council, and that he was a "whole-hogger" for one county. Later in the month the meeting of the conference of the representatives of the four counties, attended by twenty-five councillors and presided over by Mr John Bitchener, chairman of the Waimate County Council, rescinded the decision of the earlier conference by one vote, and called for a halt in the amalgamation plan for the district. The rescission motion was moved by Mr T. B. Garrick, chairman of the Levels council, and seconded by Mr W. R. Davison, who said that 90% of Mackenzie ratepayers were against it, and they should receive a fair deal. The voting resulted:

For the motion: T. B. Garrick (Levels), R. G. Cleland (Levels),

J. E. P. Cameron (Levels), D. Grant (Levels), T. W. Brosnahan (Levels), G. Murray (Mackenzie), A. F. Campbell (Mackenzie), W. R. Davison (Mac-G. Murray (Mackenzie), A. F. Campbell (Mackenzie), W. R. Davison (Mackenzie), P. Kidd (Mackenzie), A. Mackenzie (Mackenzie), T. Lyon (Geraldine), Ross Brodie (Geraldine), A. Bisdee (Geraldine). Total 13.

Against the motion: John Bitchener (Waimate), H. B. S. Johnstone (Waimate), H. M. Whatman (Waimate), N. A. Rattray (Waimate), A. S. Elworthy (Waimate), W. Lindsay (Waimate), J. W. Hayes (Waimate), R. Sinclair (Waimate), C. Ley (Geraldine), K. Mackenzie (Geraldine), J. Acland (Geraldine), and C. J. Talbot (Mackenzie). Total 12.

#### HIGH PRESSURE WATER SUPPLY

On 26th April 1937, the Fairlie Businessmen's Association asked the Mackenzie County Council to call a public meeting to consider the possibility of obtaining a high pressure water supply for the town. The meeting was duly called and held, and a large and representative gathering asked the council to obtain a survey and estimate of the cost of such water supply for Fairlie, and for a similar scheme for underground drainage. The council sanctioned the preparation of reports.

In November, it was intimated that the water supply and drainage scheme would cost £13,000, with an annual cost of £780. There were 200 houses in Fairlie which could be included in the scheme. It was said that this could be cheaper than the present cost of maintenance of the water races to Fairlie of £640 a year which was likely to increase. In January 1938, a suggested pipeline from Three Springs was discussed. This would cost £17,000. The Fairlie Citizens' Association suggested that definite estimates of this proposal should be obtained, and the possibility of a Government grant similar to that granted to the Downlands scheme be ascertained. In February, the Minister of Works (Mr Semple) said that if the Mackenzie County Council could show that the scheme would assist rural land, he would consider a subsidy. Cricklewood could be the main district included, and Punaroa and Lambrook residents would also have the opportunity to be connected with the high pressure pipe.

In March 1938, the council asked the Local Bodies Loans Board for permission to raise a loan of £17,000, and an additional £3000 to make advances for connections. In the meantime the Public Works engineer opposed the idea of Cricklewood coming into the scheme, as it could be supplied from the Downlands scheme. The engineer was therefore instructed to go into the question of supplying farms between Three Springs and Fairlie. In February, the Minister of Labour, the Hon. H. T. Armstrong, in a visit to Fairlie, gave a sympathetic hearing to a request for a subsidy for the high pressure town water supply and sewerage scheme.

The scheme adopted that month was a pipeline supply from Three Springs, and a brief report supplied by the consulting engineer, Mr H. G. Royds, stated that the complete scheme, including sewerage, reticulation and labour costs, would amount to £6900, while material and other costs would total £14,000. The labour costs would be reduced considerably by an unemployment subsidy. The usual Government subsidy of £3 a week for unemployed labour was increased to £4. The scheme was expected to find work for fifty men for thirty weeks, and the Unemployment Promotion Fund would be contributing £4800.

A poll of ratepayers carried the proposal by 106 votes to 10, a handsome majority of 96. A contract was entered into with Mr Royds to see the scheme through. Work commenced in March 1939, but it was not completed until October 1940, delays being due to shortage of materials, and only 75% of expected labour being available. The total cost was £23,000, of which £17,000 was loan money and £6000 Government subsidy.

#### TUNNEL ROAD AT CAVE

In August 1937, Mr T. D. Burnett, M.P., put a proposal to the council that a tunnel road should be built through the Cave hill. The county engineer (Mr Jeune) was instructed to draw up a report. Mr Burnett said he would approach the Public Works Department for funds to carry out the work. He said the road over the hill had four bad corners, and that traffic was steadily increasing. That season one carrier alone had taken over 2600 tons of lime, and the use of lime and superphosphate was increasing. Already a school bus made four trips daily over the hill, and more trips were likely.

In May 1938, the Minister of Public Works (Mr Semple) said that an engineering investigation had been made by the Main Highways Board, and the departmental estimate for a tunnel 430 feet long was £15,200, with a gradient of one in nine. The board was of the opinion that, having regard to traffic considerations, the expenditure of that amount was not justified. Alternative proposals were investigated relative to the construction of an open cut, and a deviation which would improve curvature and visibility. The board did not favour either of these alternatives, as it considered that the expenditure involved would be better applied in improving the existing road.

The communication from the minister concluded: "This portion of main highway is under the immediate jurisdiction of the Mackenzie County Council, and if the council desired to improve the existing road, the Board would be willing to grant a subsidy, provided of course, that detailed proposals were first submitted for approval." Mr Burnett commented, "One Sunday alone, last September, 134 cars went over the hill; in a week 703. In the January highways tally it was in the neighbourhood of 1100 for the week. If we cannot have a straight line tunnel, well then let it be a straight line cut, although the latter would be a ghastly blot on the landscape. The minister is out to make the roads safer, and everyone rightly cheers him; well, here is a most urgent matter to his hand."

#### VISIT OF RT HON. M. J. SAVAGE

In the course of a comprehensive tour of South Canterbury, the Prime Minister, the Rt Hon. M. J. Savage, accompanied by the Minister of Mines, the Hon. P. C. Webb, visited Temuka, Winchester, Geraldine, Fairlie, Albury and Waimate on 1st August 1938. In each centre the ministerial party was greeted by large crowds, the largest being at Fairlie, where the theatre was unable to accommodate an attendance of about 450. Mr Savage and party were taken to the Fairlie District High School where he addressed the children, signed autograph books, and planted a tree given by the Crown Tenants Association, in the school grounds. In an address, Mr Savage claimed that the Labour Government's legislation had been humanitarian, and in a number of his addresses he used for comparison the difficulties and criticism encountered by Christ 2000 years ago.

On this visit an astonishing ignorance of local history on the part of local leaders was revealed, and, more astonishing still, no one seems to have noticed it. Mr W. R. Davison said Mr Savage was the third Prime Minister to visit Fairlie, the other two being Mr R. J. Seddon and Sir Joseph Ward. Then Mr T. D. Burnett wrote, putting the record right. He said Mr Savage was the fourth Prime Minister to visit Fairlie, the most important being the Rt Hon. W. F. Massey in March 1922. Both leaders were wrong.

Sir Joseph Ward made two visits to South Canterbury on election tours. He visited Temuka on 29th November 1908, and Geraldine the following day, and then a brief visit to Timaru on 30th November 1911. There is no record of a visit to Fairlie. Mr Massey made an election tour of the South Island in 1922, but there is no mention of his visiting Fairlie. On the other hand there was an important visit of the Hon. T. Mackenzie during his short term of office as Premier in 1912. Mr Massey made an informal visit to Fairlie in 1914, but this was of low key level, the chairman merely informing the council that he had entertained the Prime Minister on their behalf.

### TAR-SEALING OF STREETS

Apparently the first attempt to introduce tar-sealing of streets into Fairlie was made on 1st December 1939, when Mr C. J. Talbot said he hoped some tar-sealing would be done in Fairlie the following financial year. Mr Talbot made this comment following a foreman's report that patching had been done in the town. He said the council should go into the matter when the next estimates were under discussion. There was intense traffic on some roads, and putting shingle on them was expensive.

Mr W. Scott said he would like to see something done, but tar-sealing was costly. To seal School Road would cost £500, but he did not know where they were going to get the money from. He thought that if they had that much money, or even £2000, it should be used to reduce rates before spending it on streets.

### AN UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT

On 26th January 1940, Mr J. F. D. Jeune, the engineer-clerk, tendered his resignation following the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting which disclosed that the council had discussed dispensing with his services as a move to save his salary. The council decided by six votes to one to accept his resignation, Mr C. J. Talbot voting against it. Mr Jeune resigned as at the end of February.

There appears to have been some humbug in the council's action. Mr Jeune had just returned from a tour of England, the Continent and the United States, and resigned in replying to a welcome extended to him on his return. The chairman, Mr W. Scott, said that Mr Jeune had been awarded a Carnegie Scholarship, and had an opportunity of examining local body administration overseas. He expressed the hope that he would be able to put his knowledge into practice, and said that they were pleased to see him back again.

In a subsequent explanation, Mr W. R. Davison said that the chief reasons

the council could do without an engineer were that the big job of road-making in the back country had been suspended by agreement with Mr Semple after the war broke out, and that the bridge plans were well forward. There would be little work for an engineer for the next twelve months. A press article, headed "Mackenzie County Economy", concluded, "Those who will be disturbed by the alacrity with which all but one member of the council accepted the resignation, must think the Mackenzie County Council is extraordinarily certain of itself when it refuses the opportunity of benefitting from Mr Jeune's new experience."

The council at the beginning of March reappointed Mr Jeune to the position. The principal influence in the decision was a letter from the chairman of the Highways Board which stated that unless the council had an engineer the board would have to take control of the state highways running through the county. Many petitions were received on the matter: seven persons in Burkes Pass, and six more in the back country; twenty-two ratepayers of Fairlie wanted to keep Mr Jeune, at least during the winter months, and another eight country ratepayers said the same thing; Mr T. D. Burnett, on behalf of twelve working runholders, both men and women, and himself; Mr C. W. F. Hamilton of Irishman's Creek Station, and Mr C. A. Parker of Rollesby Station. These petitions were merely received as the reappointment had already been made. The only member who voted against the reappointment was Mr W. R. Davison who said, "The ship is being scuttled."

There was a very long discussion at the council meeting at which Mr Jeune was present. Mr Jeune said, "I personally will be pleased to come back." He said the council had the finest staff and equipment in New Zealand. He appealed to councillors to discuss problems with him, and said he welcomed criticism and frank discussion. He had had other things offered him, but had sat tight, hoping that things would change.

#### HOSPITAL BOARD LEVIES

An annual irksome levy charged against counties was the provision that had to be made to finance the South Canterbury Hospital and Charitable Aid Board. The levies required of the four counties during the 1939 financial year were: Geraldine £5088, Levels £4819, Mackenzie £4022 and Waimate £9740; whereas the other local bodies paid: Timaru Borough £8359, Temuka Borough £561, Waimate Borough £779, Geraldine Borough £306, and Pleasant Point Town Board £162. For the whole area this made £33,836.

In June 1939 a well attended conference of the four counties with a view to seeking relief from the increasingly heavy burden of the levies for the South Canterbury Hospital Board's institutions passed this motion: "That in view of the ruinous position in the matter of hospital rates, and the inability of farmers and other ratepayers to meet these unjust and iniquitous charges, the Government should be pressed to give immediate relief to County Councils in this matter, first, by the immediate stabilisation of the contributions of all county councils at the 1938 figure; and second, thereafter by making up out of the Social Security Fund all deficiencies in hospital allocations thus caused." In the discussion, figures were quoted to show that over the four years from 1935 to 1939 Ashburton rose from £7000 to £11,000, Southland £10,000 to nearly £18,000, and Waimate from £5000 to nearly £8000, but during the

current year to £9740. The total increase for the four counties during the current year was £10,227, and they might want another £10,000 the following year.

Under the Government Social Security Scheme inpatient treatment was free from 1st July 1939, and outpatients from 1st March 1941. This matter was to surface again in 1946.

#### BURKES PASS WATER SUPPLY

On 26th January 1940, apparently a previous proposition was raised again, as it was decided that further authority be obtained from the residents of Burkes Pass to raise a loan for a water supply in the area. Since the first authority was obtained, the change in the rate of interest and repayments table had increased the estimated cost. In April the council passed the necessary resolution to make a rating levy to cover a loan of £500 for twenty years. A special rating area was agreed upon, and also that the loan money should be obtained by way of a debenture, the loan to come from the cash held in the "purchase of land account" of the county.

In July the chairman reported that owing to increased prices for materials the cost of the scheme would exceed the original estimates. It was decided that the scheme should be gone on with, subject to the householders concerned being agreeable. On 31st January 1941 it was announced that the Burkes Pass water supply scheme had been completed, and water had been carried to the boundaries of the various sections. The total cost was £600. The increase in the cost of pipes alone was £150. The annual instalment to cover principal and interest would be £45. During the summer the people had expressed appreciation of the scheme, the council was told.

#### FREE LIBRARY SERVICE

On 4th May 1940, the Mackenzie County Council approved of a free library service for the county and increased its annual vote from £150 to £250 to enable this to be done. It was said that it was believed that Mackenzie was the first county in New Zealand to have a free library service, and special approval had been given by the Minister of Education for the extension of the "A" service of the Country Library Service, previously available to borough councils only, to the Mackenzie County. An initial supply of 600 books had been made available for the county, and would be available as soon as the council approved of the scheme. Mr G. T. Alley, officer in charge of the service, referring to the Cave and Albury libraries, suggested that as a basis of discussion on a population basis, 100 books could be lent to Albury and fifty to Cave, changeable three times a year. The ideal supervision would be an active library committee responsible for each centre.

On 1st July an advertisement appeared in the newspaper stating that the library would be closed from 1st July to 6th July for the purpose of instituting the free library service, classifying books, and making alterations. An assistant had been sent from the Country Library Service's headquarters in Wellington, and cataloguing and classification were under way. The modern system of classification allowed quicker identification of books and simpler reference. The Albury Public Library was amalgamated with the scheme and operated from the following week.

## ALBURY HALL

On 12th August 1940, a proposal that the Mackenzie County Council take over the Albury Hall was placed before the council by Mr P. Kidd. The hall was owned by a company, and in consequence appeals to the public for assistance had failed, because they adopted the attitude that it was unreasonable to raise money to go into the pockets of shareholders. The hall had been built in 1906, and the forming of a company was a mistake as it had never been looked upon as an investment. It was agreed that the council would consider taking over the hall in the event of the company wishing to vest it in the council, provided the Albury ratepayers were prepared to meet the cost. Mr G. Murray dissented from this decision.

In September the company stated the terms upon which they would transfer their undertaking to the council. The council would take over all assets and liabilities including the cost of the voluntary winding-up of the company. The liabilities would total about £120. In October the council decided to do this, and that Albury Riding be created a special rating area, with the exception of that portion bounded on the north and west by the Mona Vale and Pareora Gorge roads, and that a poll of ratepayers be held. The poll resulted in 142 in favour and 47 against the proposal.

In November, when advice had been received that all legal requirements regarding the liquidation of the company and transfer to the council had been completed, it was decided to set up a hall committee consisting of the two riding members and three others elected at a public meeting, and also that final repairs to the library room should be completed immediately. Charges were subsequently fixed, and a caretaker appointed at £5 a year.

## CHARLES JOHN TALBOT

Born in the Rangatira Valley, Temuka, Mr C. J. Talbot was educated at Temuka and the Timaru Boys High School. In 1890, he took over his father's farm at Fairlie, and remained on the property up to the time of his death, 25th March 1942. As a member of the Liberal Party he represented Temuka in Parliament from 1914 to 1919, spanning the war years, when he was defeated by Mr T. D. Burnett by a narrow margin. He was a member of the Mackenzie County Council continuously from 1920 to his death, a total of twenty-two years. He was chairman from 1923 to 1933, when he did not seek re-election. Mr George Murray was elected unanimously in his place. However, two years later Mr Murray did not seek re-election, owing to his great distance from the county centre — Braemar. Mr Talbot took over again, and was chairman from 1935 to 1937.

For many years he was on the executive of the New Zealand Counties Association, the last five as chairman. He was also a member of the Main Highways Board since its inception in 1922. He also served two terms on the South Canterbury Electric Power Board, from 1924 to 1932 and from 1935 to 1938, and long terms as a warden and lay reader in the Anglican Church.

Mr Talbot is well commemorated in Fairlie. There is the C. J. Talbot Memorial Motor Camp in which there is a tablet to his memory, and a stained glass memorial window to his honour in St Stephen's Anglican Church. In 1946, Gorge Road, Fairlie, was renamed Talbot Street.

## THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Hitara waha huka, upoko maro  
He tangata tohetohe ki te riri, e!  
Hinga atu, hinga mai i runga o Ruhia,  
Ka wheru ona mahi! Hei! Aue, aue, aue!  
*Hitler, frothy-mouth, wooden-head,  
He's the man who wanted to fight,  
Beaten here, beaten there, all over Russia,  
You can wipe him and his works.*

— Maori Poetry (Barry Mitcalfe)

The role of the Mackenzie County Council in the Second World War was vastly different from that of the First World War. In the first place, there was not the bitter controversy leading up to the war, as to how conscientious objectors should be treated. After the outbreak of hostilities the council was not expected to co-operate with the Government in a recruiting campaign to canvass the county for volunteers.

Although the Second World War was against the same Germany as the first, it was of a different character. It was a clash with a fanatical dictator to stop him from realising his vision of a Third Reich which was to last a thousand years. He had an obsession about bolshevism, and by a strange quirk of history the Allies and the Bolsheviks combined to crush his designs. In the First World War there was an intense hatred against the German people as such, which was not so manifest in the second.

### WAR LEADERS

Then there was the nature of the leadership. The leaders of the Labour Government, Peter Fraser, James O'Brien, Bob Semple, Paddy Webb and others, had served time for "sedition" in the First World War, but became the stalwart leaders of the nation in the second. To them the First World War was an imperialist one, the second an ideological one. The communists deserted the pacifists when Hitler invaded Russia in 1941, and Joseph Stalin became our great ally.

### COUNCIL'S FIRST MOVE

The first reaction of the Mackenzie County Council after the declaration of war on 3rd September 1939 was to hold over the purchase of a Caterpillar tractor and angle-dozer, and to postpone until after hostilities certain road construction work in the Tekapo Riding, even though a five to one subsidy had been granted, and to let the Government know of its action. Later the council offered its services, and whatever plant it may have, to the Government, should an emergency arise during the war.

### HOME GUARD

In September 1940, a committee for the Home Guard was set up, consisting of (a) the council as a whole, (b) the Farmers' Union (the president, Mr Scott), (c) A.M.P. Society (Mr Talbot and Mr Kirke), (d) Patriotic Committee (Mr Kidd, Mr Davison and Mr Scott) (e) R.S.A. (Mr Davison, Mr Allan and Mr Kirke), (f) the county engineer (Mr D. Jeune), and for the Labour Party Mr J. Braddick was asked to act.

At the next council meeting the chairman reported that the organisation of the Home Guard was in working order, and fifty or more applications for enrolment had been received. Mr Jeune reported that the Mackenzie Pipe Band had enrolled as a body. By December, a fully organised battalion was in operation, said to be one of the first in New Zealand. By February 1941, there were 570 enrolments in the county area. Aorangi Hall was let to the Home Guard free of charge, and Mr Jeune was a group commander.

#### PATRIOTIC COMMITTEE

The county offices became the headquarters for the work of the Patriotic Committee with the engineer-clerk as secretary. In July he reported that the final work in connection with the Million Pound Patriotic Appeal for relief necessitated by air raids had been successfully concluded, the county being able to forward its full quota, £2469/12/- net having been raised throughout the district.

#### PROPOSED AIR BASE AT TEKAPO

In March 1941, the council decided to urge the Minister of Defence (Hon. F. Jones) and the Minister of Public Works (Hon. H. T. Armstrong) to consider the establishment of a military and civilian air base at Tekapo. Mr G. Murray said that an aerodrome was needed very badly. Tekapo had the additional advantage that with the lake close at hand it would be used as a seaplane base. At the time the Public Works Department had large construction works in the vicinity.

#### COASTAL DEFENCE

In March 1942, the council was critical on the question of adequate defence in the Timaru area, and in particular defence works for the Home Guard. Telegrams were sent to the Prime Minister (Rt Hon. Peter Fraser) and the Minister of Defence (Hon. Frederick Jones), "That at this critical period, the council views with alarm the inadequacy of the Home Guard defence works, including trenches, dummy trenches, and wiring on our coastal areas, and respectfully requests the Government to carry out immediately these very urgent defence works."

#### NO NEW WORK PROGRAMME

A major decision was made in March 1942 when the council decided on a policy of no new work to be undertaken, but at the same time not to allow county assets to go to waste. Regarding staffing, this would need looking into with possible dismissals, but in view of the possibility of snow in the winter it would be advisable to have senior and experienced men re-engaged. This produced an unforeseen staff crisis, as in April only three men were left on the staff. Rumours of dismissals were rife, and had caused the men to leave the jobs. This caused great concern for some time.

#### ENGINEER CALLED UP

In December 1944, the engineer-clerk, Mr D. Jeune, was in the ballot, and the chairman (Mr C. V. Kirke) asked members if an appeal should be lodged for his retention. It was agreed to do so. (Mr Kirke had succeeded Mr Scott as chairman in June 1942.)

## HARVESTING IN 1943

On 29th January 1943, a deputation consisting of Captain Fancourt and Lieutenant Burgess waited on the council in connection with a proposed camp of army men for harvesting in the district. The council agreed to pay for the fitting up of a pump at the showgrounds, and for power used while the army was in occupation. It was also agreed that the council would give any help whatever to the army in order to assist the harvesting arrangements of the community in general.

## TIMARU SERVICES CLUB

In August 1944, a deputation from the Timaru Services Club, supported by local members of the R.S.A., asked for a grant from county funds for the club. Mr Kirke pointed out the advantages of this club to the men of the county, and suggested this was a unique case which warranted support. Mr J. Allan, while wholeheartedly behind the project, said he could not see his way to grant ratepayers' money for the purpose. After further discussion it was unanimously agreed to grant £100 towards the club.

## PEACE CELEBRATIONS

Although Germany was not defeated until the following May, and Japan's surrender was in September 1945, in October 1944 a committee was formed, consisting of the chairman, the members of the Fairlie Riding, and the engineer, to bring down a report on the form the celebrations should take after the armistice had been signed.

## PLANNING AT LAKE TEKAPO

Although the Mackenzie County Council was not responsible for the hydro-electricity project at Lake Tekapo, it was naturally interested in the development of Tekapo itself, and the environmental impact of the hydro scheme. To this end a commission was appointed by the council to form definite plans on which to work. In March 1939, the commission decided to adopt a long-range policy of planning at Tekapo. The co-operation of the Public Works Department was to be sought, and recommendations for the improvement of approaches advanced. The commission consisted of Dr L. S. Talbot (chairman), Dr E. G. Stubbs of Oamaru, Messrs T. D. Burnett, M.P., George Murray, William Scott and G. Hunter-Weston.

As the Public Works Department would be establishing a base camp at Lake Tekapo during the construction of the hydro-electric works, it was suggested that it should arrange its accommodation on approved town planning lines, and that the type of huts and shelters erected should be such that they would be of use after the construction camp was abandoned. It also decided that major access roads should be put in order, and in particular the road along the ridge around the lake should be developed. A subsequent inspection by the commission convinced them that under a proper progressive planning scheme the area could be developed to become an important link in the chain of tourist centres in New Zealand. They also agreed that its amenities would make it one of the health and rest centres of the Dominion.

Opportunity was taken in April to place the views of the commission before the Hon. W. Lee Martin who was visiting the area to discuss farmers' problems with them. In June the Hon. Robert Semple visited the area, and, commenting

on planning, said, "The idea is to get men as near to their work as possible, but if the site is terribly bleak, I will have it looked into. Proper huts could be used, which would be suitable for tourists afterwards. We will give you 100 per cent co-operation; we want to develop the district."

A report on the progress of the hydro-electric scheme in August 1941 said that the transformation of the former peaceful holiday resort to a veritable township was a striking contrast. There was a school for forty children. Married men's camps were situated in high, sunny positions, and houses normally comprised three rooms, but additional accommodation was provided for men with large families. High-pressure water was laid on, and one wash-house provided for every two houses. A feature of the single men's quarters was the provision of cook-houses, bath-houses and drying rooms. There was a large central social hall operated by the Y.M.C.A. Electric power was provided in each hut for lighting and radio. A large recreation hall, 78ft by 30ft, had been opened recently, proving a boon to the community which totalled about 250 including children. A large proportion of the men had enrolled in the Home Guard.

#### WILLIAM SCOTT

A name closely associated with the Mackenzie County Council was that of William Scott who died on 18th September 1942 at the age of sixty-one years. He had been a councillor from 1929 to 1935 and from 1938 to the time of his death, a total of ten years. He was chairman for three years from 1939 to June 1942 when he did not seek further nomination. Mr Scott represented the county on several local bodies, being a member of the Timaru High School Board of Governors from 1929 to 1942, thirteen years in all. He was a member of the South Canterbury Electric Power Board from 1932 to 1935 and from 1938 to 1942, and was also a member of the Tekapo Town Planning Commission. Speaking at the time of his retirement, Mr Geo. Murray said, "Mr Scott as chairman has brought us out with a financial standing which is more than satisfactory, and there is no gainsaying that this is more due to his chairmanship than to any other circumstance." In his opinion Mr Scott ranked among the best chairmen he had known. Both Mr Kirke and Mr P. Kidd endorsed these remarks.

It was on the nomination of Mr Scott, seconded by Mr Kidd, that Mr C. V. Kirke was elected the new chairman. Under wartime regulations the council appointed his successor to the council, and Mr W. B. Trotter was elected on the casting vote of the chairman.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1934

##### BIRDS' EGGS AND HEADS

It was decided not to purchase birds' eggs or heads. The chairman, Mr G. Murray, said that in the Mackenzie County sheep were often fly-blown and birds were necessary. No mention is made of kea beaks.

##### HALF-HOLIDAY

Thursday was retained as the weekly half-holiday.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1935

### SICK BENEFIT SCHEME

A sick benefit scheme was adopted for employees. The staff were agreeable to the idea. They would contribute 1/- a week which would bring in about £75 a year. All men engaged must join the scheme.

### MA WARO BRIDGE

A tender for the building of the Ma Waro bridge of £775 by Mr J. Kennedy was accepted.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1936

### KEA BEAKS

It was agreed that a previous motion that kea beaks should be purchased at 5/- a head should be rescinded, and that neither kea beaks nor birds' eggs should be purchased.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1937

### SATURDAY HALF-HOLIDAY

It was decided to hold the half-holiday on the Saturday instead of Thursday, Mr G. Murray asking that his vote be recorded against it.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1938

### THOSE KEAS AGAIN

It was agreed that 2/6 should be paid for keas' heads up to £15, but that the office should satisfy itself that the keas were actually obtained in the county. This was later increased to £25.

### BRIDGE CONTRACTS

In April a tender of £1043/18/- by Reid Bros of Christchurch was accepted to erect Bracken's bridge at Albury, and also £239/19/- by the same tenderer for Cox's bridge.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1940

### RURAL HOUSING SCHEME

On 14th August the council advertised that it had supported the rural housing scheme, and would be glad to hear from any ratepayer who wished to obtain a loan for the purpose of erecting a cottage or improving a house on his holding.

### SANITATION SYSTEM

It was agreed that the sanitation system in Fairlie should be discontinued as at 31st March 1942, and that in the meantime all residents in Fairlie had to be connected with the new high-pressure water supply and underground sewerage.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1941

### CONTROL OF CEMETERIES

In June it was decided that the council should take over the control of the cemeteries, instead of committees being appointed as in the past, except that the Burkes Pass committee should be allowed to carry on.

#### **PLANTING OF TREES**

In December it was reported that the council had completed its tree planting programme for the season. In all, 33,000 trees, mostly oregon and *pinus insignis*, had been planted at Lake Tekapo, Lake Pukaki, and Ashwick Flat.

#### **SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1943**

##### **GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S VISIT**

On 18th January 1943, Marshal of the Air Force, Sir Cyril L. N. Newall, and Lady Newall visited Fairlie. After the usual civic reception, Sir Cyril planted a tree in the domain — the tree selected was a native of the Himalayas where Sir Cyril had served some nine years.

##### **HIRE OF AORANGI HALL**

It was agreed that the Labour Party should be granted the same privileges as the Patriotic Committee in connection with a reduction of 50% on the price of the Aorangi Hall which was being engaged for patriotic purposes.

# 9

## A Decade of Adjustment, 1944-1953

### COUNCIL ACQUIRES STRATHCONAN PARK

On 8th March 1943, the council, having received letters from the managers of the Strathconan Recreation Ground, and also Mr Rolleston of Messrs Tripp and Rolleston, formally agreed that they would accept the transfer of the Strathconan recreation grounds from the trustees to the council. A further letter was received from the solicitors setting out the necessary procedure to bring this about.

The history of the park dated back to 1909, when a gift of land adjoining the Fairlie Athletic Grounds was made to the township by the Misses McLean for the purpose of a park and recreation ground. The land was vested in trustees, and a board of managers appointed. The original trust deed was signed by Anna Jessie McLean, Catherine Julia McLean, and (Dr) Sydney John Cook. A swimming bath was built on the land in 1911, the bowling green being formed some time later. The area was also used by the golf club as part of the links. Provision was also made in the deed, that at some future time the park could be transferred to the Fairlie Borough Council, should such a body be constituted. In 1943, the managers decided that the park should be handed over to local body control, but as there was no borough council, special legislation was required to transfer it to the Mackenzie County Council. To do this it was necessary to call a public meeting to pass a special resolution. The meeting was called for Monday, 24th May, at 9 p.m., in the Aorangi Hall. It was said that a sum of money was invested and held in trust for the improvement of the park, and if spent in the right manner the park could be made more attractive and useful to the public than at present.

As a consequence of the meeting, the council resolved to accept the transfer as requested, and agreed to the terms of the resolution passed at the public meeting, and further agreed to hold the grounds subject to the terms of the trust deed dated 17th November 1909, and to exercise all the powers and duties of the trustees as set out in that deed, and that steps be taken to obtain the necessary legislative authority. The necessary legislation went through before the end of 1943.

In January 1944, it was agreed that the Fairlie Riding members should be appointed managers, and a committee consisting of representatives of football, tennis, golf, bowling and athletics, and the school committee, should be requested to hold a meeting and draw up a report for improvements of the ground generally, and report back to council. A report was duly presented,

covering such items as rent, insurance, painting of the pavilion, grazing rights, drainage, and bridges. The report was received and, with the engineer's approval, the committee allowed to go on with the bridges that were required for the golf grounds.

### THE NEED FOR AN ADEQUATE MORGUE

At the conclusion of an inquest held in Fairlie in April 1944, the coroner, Mr C. W. Wood, said: "I have had occasion in this case to visit the so-called morgue, and I am astounded that the people of this fair town should tolerate such a state of affairs. It is deplorable that a doctor should be asked to perform a post-mortem operation in such a make shift of a shed; harness, rubbish, straw and farm tackle lying about everywhere; no light excepting from an open doorway; no water except that carried in kerosene tins for the doctor, and no means of heating other than a fire in the grass outside. In the absence of knowledge to the contrary, I think the position reflects seriously on the council, or some other person responsible."

This devastating statement naturally provoked a rejoinder. "The remarks of the coroner were made without any knowledge of the position," said the chairman, Mr C. V. Kirke. "The council has been well aware of the need for a new morgue and better facilities for the doctor for a long time. A new site has been procured, plans for a new building approved, and the work will be put in hand as soon as the labour and materials are available."

At the council meeting that month, Mr Kirke said that it was more than six months since the council had decided to build a morgue. The engineer said that the matter had been held up by both the Public Works and Health departments. The latter was preparing the plans and specifications, which should be completed at an early date. It was decided that tenders be called as soon as the plans came to hand.

By September tenders had not been accepted, and it was decided that modified plans be prepared by the engineer, and the work carried out by day labour. In January 1946, it was reported that the morgue was likely to cost nearer £200 than the £100 originally estimated, owing to a lot of unforeseen extras required by the regulations. The Hospital Board had agreed to subsidise the cost £1 for £1 on the estimated £100. It was agreed to approach the board for this subsidy on the total cost.

### SOUTH CANTERBURY CATCHMENT BOARD

The importance of the South Canterbury Catchment Board as part of local government was recognised by the Mackenzie County Council at the first election of representatives to the board in May 1944. There were three nominees for Mackenzie County — the county chairman, Mr C. V. Kirke, the county clerk, Mr J. F. D. Jeune, and Mr J. J. Page. Mr Kirke had been elected unopposed to the council for the Opuha Riding, yet he placed an advertisement in the papers emphasising the importance of recording a vote for the catchment board. He stated that the board could have power to levy rates nearly twice as high as those then paid by the farmers in the county. He then appealed to the electors of Opuha, that although they had no council candidate to vote for, from a financial point of view it was most important to vote for the candidate for the catchment board who would best serve their interests.

Mr Jeune was elected to the board, defeating his own chairman in a decisive vote as follows: James Frederick Dudley Jeune, 452 votes; Charles Vere Kirke, 331 votes; John Joseph Page, 284 votes.

The following year, Mr Jeune resigned, having accepted a United Nations post overseas, the council forthwith appointing Mr Kirke to replace him. In 1947 another councillor, Mr W. B. Trotter, was elected.

In November 1944, the Catchment Board advised that the Mackenzie County share of the administrative rates was £87. The board suggested that a clause be inserted in all leases that the lessee maintain in good order the vegetative cover. Eight reserves were due for renewal by the end of the year. It was decided to call tenders for twenty-one years, but Mr Jeune said that a suggestion had been made to the board that the rent should be reviewed every five years. In June 1946, for the first time, a South Canterbury Catchment Board rate was advertised at 1/10th of a penny in the pound, capital value. The following year it was 1/8th of a penny in the pound.

#### WORST FLOODS ON RECORD

What was described at the time as the "worst flood on record", and "calamity in South Canterbury", hit the area in a storm which lasted from Monday evening, 19th February, till Wednesday midnight, 21st February 1945 — a matter of fifty hours in all. Other parts of South Canterbury suffered more severely than the Mackenzie country. In Fairlie 286 points of rain (2.86 inches) were recorded in forty-eight hours, but Mr C. V. Kirke, "Pusey", near Mount Michael, recorded 550 points in fifty hours, and Mr A. H. Gillingham, of Lambrook, 376 for forty-eight hours.

The township of Fairlie was flooded. The creek near Doyle's mill overflowed, and the flood water caused the main street to be turned into a river. Houses were flooded in parts, and shopkeepers had an anxious time. The town's water supply gave out, the main pipes having been broken. Fairlie was isolated. The road above Kimbell was blocked through the Opihi River having broken its banks near Horseshoe Bend. The road to Geraldine was impassable at the Opihi bridge near Fairlie. The road to Timaru was also cut off through the approach to one of the bridges at Albury being washed out, and flooded conditions near Ma Waro. Train and bus services were marooned in Fairlie, and the failure of the water supply meant the closing of the two schools.

#### REQUEST FOR FINANCE

At the March meeting of the council the chairman reported that he had sent a request to the Minister of Finance (Hon. W. Nash), asking for financial assistance, and also to the Minister of Works (Hon. R. Semple), asking for the loan of equipment. He also received a telegram from the Governor-General sympathising with the people in the flooded area.

#### INADEQUATE LOCAL NEWS

On 5th March 1945, the council expressed its concern at the lack of local news which was given out by the broadcasting service during the floods. It was felt that considerable help could have been given to the down country areas had earlier advice been received by them of the flooded position in the back country. Several members spoke in support of this, and it was agreed that the Government should be asked to reinstate the weather forecast at 9 p.m.

It was further agreed to request the Minister of Broadcasting to make means available to collect information from back-country areas, to assist in warning the down-country areas of flood dangers, and that in flood periods reports from local bodies of damage to roads and bridges, and general local news, should be broadcast at the regular news session. The council also urged that a broadcasting station be established in Timaru as a means of assisting during emergency periods. It was explained that much damage and loss of stock could have been avoided had adequate warning been issued of the approaching flood.

#### ESTIMATED COST OF REPAIRS

In April, the engineer (Mr Jeune) reported that the restoration of flood damage had proceeded throughout the previous month. He submitted a statement on the extent of the flood damage, and estimated the cost of repairs at £32,245. Details were:—

Bridges destroyed: Boundary Creek £960, Suttons £1440, Ashwick £4200, Te Puni £540, Temples £600, Pringles £960, Skipton £900, Rockwood £400, Clayton £1200, Stony Creek £200, Raincliff £1920; a total of £13,320.

Bridge repairs: Mathias £75, Clayton £75, Raincliff (temporary) £75, Deepdale £75, Gooseberry Creek £25, Mackintosh's (temporary) £50; total £375. Approaches to bridges: £2100.

County roads: Thirty-five miles of road, £7500; Fairlie main street and Allandale Road, sealing, £750.

Fairlie water supply, repairs, £220; clearing Fairlie Creek, £100; river protection works, £2135; additional essential works brought into prominence by the flood, £5740.

#### SLOW PROGRESS

In July 1945, the engineer left to take up a new appointment, and in the meantime Miss J. M. Dick became acting county clerk, and engineer's reports were compiled by the foreman, Mr T. Guinnessy. During August and September, slow progress was made in restoration due to abnormal adverse weather. There was continuous rain early in August, and difficulty was experienced in keeping some of the roads open to traffic. Culverts throughout the county were giving trouble, and roads, particularly in Middle Valley, had been blocked by trees blown down in a severe gale. Flood damage was again contended with during September. Resulting from a conference on flood damage in Wellington, the chairman, Mr C. V. Kirke, was able to announce that the county had been granted a subsidy of £6705 towards the repair of flood damage. He had hoped to receive more, but the amount granted would be a great help.

The new engineer, Mr Terence Moorhouse, took up his appointment at the beginning of January 1946. In June, we find the chairman bemoaning the fact that progress in making good flood damage had been disappointingly slow. This was due to several reasons, he said: (1) We were more than four months without an engineer; (2) in order to obtain the Government subsidy, plans had to be approved by the Public Works Department, which necessitated considerable delay; (3) reconstruction of the bridges was held up for the want of suitable materials, which were almost impossible to obtain.

## SNOW AND FLOOD

It could not be said that the Mackenzie County Council had repaired the damage caused by the devastating flood of February 1945, when the district was again hit by severe flooding due to heavy snow in September 1946. Snow in high country, streams swollen to heavy torrents, bridges washed away, very heavy scouring, heavy stock losses threatened, and communications cut between Fairlie and Timaru resulted from the cold snap. The bus and train both left Fairlie at the normal time, but were forced to turn back near Pleasant Point.

The heaviest fall of snow was experienced in the Albury district. The bridge over Nelson's Creek was washed out, but a temporary bridge was erected immediately. One pile of the bridge on the Long Gully Road collapsed, and approaches washed away. There were many wash-outs and scours. Stationed at Nelson Creek, a Mackenzie County grader assisted motorists through the stream, but the torrential rain caused the creek to rise so rapidly that the grader itself became bogged, and it took the best part of an afternoon for the council staff, together with another grader, to get it out. More than 6in of snow fell at Burkes Pass, but in the low country in the Fairlie district 14in were recorded. Sherwood Downs and Clayton suffered greatly, the council grader clearing snow to the depth of 14in. But there was only 8in at Mount Hay, 5in at Lake Tekapo, 3in at Sawdon, and 2in at the Wolds.

In October the chairman said: "Wherever there were floods in the Mackenzie county, the crossing at Nelsons Creek on the state highway at Ma Waro became impassable, and it was some time before permanent improvements were effected." The council thereupon decided to ask the Main Highways Board to erect a bridge there. At the same meeting, the county engineer (Mr Moorhouse) said, among other things, that on the Fairlie-Geraldine highway, the temporary bridge at Pringles was rebuilt, and the dip eliminated. Snow was cleared from Mount Michael. The Albury-Burkes Pass highway suffered much minor damage, and the approach to the first bridge from Albury was partially scoured. It was intended to straighten the river course by angle-dozer, and to provide a protective groin. Scouring took place extensively in the Albury Riding, nearly all the roads suffering some damage, Mount Nessing and Chamberlain roads being mentioned. In November, Mr Moorhouse was able to report that most of the roads had been graded, blocked culverts cleared, and much flood damage repaired.

However, in April 1947, the engineer gave the warning that funds might be short. There was a tremendous amount of "bread and butter" maintenance work to be done, and outlet and culvert clearing was work which was urgent. It was a matter of maintaining work which already existed, he said. It appeared that funds for road work might again be short in 1947, as they were in 1946, and he hoped that only urgent requests for new works would be sanctioned. With many new works and a strictly limited staff, it would mean that essential maintenance would be neglected.

## MAIN HIGHWAYS BOARD CONTROL

On 7th December 1945, two engineers of the Public Works Department, Messrs Evans and McIntyre, waited on the Mackenzie County Council to place before it a proposition that the Main Highways Board assume control of

state highways in the county. Mr Evans said that, without disparaging the work of the Mackenzie County Council, roads in other counties compared more than favourably with the Mackenzie County roads. As mileage in the county was great, he could not say that the board could do any better, but there were various reasons why it was considered advisable to take over the eighty-two miles of state highway. Mr Kirke explained that he realised that the roads were not in good condition, but for some time the council had to contend with abnormal conditions. Severe floods and shortage of staff had not allowed time to be spent on the highways, and many other roads had required urgent attention. The area in question was the Mackenzie section of State Highway 60. The council resolved that it desired to keep the control of this highway — Timaru to Cromwell, via Lindis-Mackenzie County section — if possible.

On 5th April 1946, the council received advice that the board had decided to take over the county section of the highway on a date to be arranged. The board fully appreciated the good work carried out by the council, but felt that the resources available to the board, and with the new organisation envisaged at Tekapo, it would be better able to keep the maintenance of the highway up to a somewhat higher standard. The board expressed its willingness to take over any surplus plant or staff as requested at a previous meeting.

On 17th April the council had an interview with Mr Evans as Canterbury representative of the Highway Board, Mr Southern, highways engineer from Christchurch, and Mr McIntyre of the Public Works Department at Temuka. The chairman asked if the board wanted to take over the highway immediately, or did they wish the council to carry on for a while, and did they have any plant ready to take over, or did they wish to take over the county plant. Mr Evans said plant would be arriving soon, but he would like the council to carry on meantime, and suggested a take-over date as 1st October. As for the council's plant, the department would be prepared to take over any modern plant, but not obsolete plant. He suggested the county engineer prepare a list and submit it to him. The chairman mentioned that the council would consider disposing of a snow plough at Tekapo. On being told that the council had no surplus men, Mr Southern promised that the department would not try to entice council men over to the service of the department. It was agreed that the department should take over the highway as from 1st October, and that a departmental officer would meet the county engineer re the purchase of any surplus plant, such plant to be sold to the department on the taking over of the highway.

In November, it was reported that immediate arrangements were being made for the Public Works Department to take over the highway, but all operations on the section from Tekapo to Ohau would be taken over first.

#### JAMES FREDERICK DUDLEY JEUNE

At very short notice in August 1945, Mr Jeune left the employ of the council to take up an appointment with U.N.R.R.A. (United Nations Relief Rehabilitation Administration) in Europe. He was accepted as assistant director Displaced Persons Assembly Centre. He had been engineer-clerk to the Mackenzie County Council since 1929. He took a prominent part in community affairs, was chairman of the Soil Conservation Committee, chair-

man of the Fairlie District High School Committee, chairman of the sub-branch of the R.S.A., and a member of the Tekapo Planning Commission for some time. He also served as secretary of the Mackenzie Patriotic Committee, was a member of the Fairlie Domain Board, and treasurer of St Stephen's Anglican Church.

He was an executive member of the Fairlie Boy Scout Group, a member of the War Loans Committee, and also of the Oil Fuel Advisory Board. He was a group commander in the Home Guard. In 1944, he was elected as one of the first members of the South Canterbury Catchment Board, but held office for only twelve months before accepting his overseas appointment. He was a Fellow of the New Zealand Society of Civil Engineers, and a Fellow of the International City Managers Association (Chicago). He had toured Europe, the United States and Great Britain on a Carnegie travelling scholarship.

On his return to New Zealand from his overseas appointment, he was appointed investigating officer of the Local Government Commission, and later acting secretary. On 18th March 1949, he, together with Mr F. B. Stephens, assistant under-secretary of the Department of Internal Affairs, were among the fifteen passengers lost when the Loadstar in which they were travelling crashed in the Tararua foothills near Waikanae and burst into flames. They were on their way back from a sitting of the Local Government Commission in Auckland. He was fifty-two years of age, married, with two children.

#### FAIRLIE LIBRARY, 1914-1945

*Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed,  
and some few to be chewed and digested.*

— Francis Bacon (1561-1626)

It would be difficult to write a history of a library by going through monthly reports, statistics, casual council minutes, and even minutes of a library committee if such were available. We are fortunate, however, in having a concise review of the activities of the Fairlie Carnegie Library during the time that Mrs M. L. West was appointed librarian at its inception in 1914 until her retirement in 1945.

Of course, there had been a library in Fairlie before the Carnegie library was built in 1914, as the county council met in the library for at least part of 1892. Nevertheless, the start of real library activity was when the new building was opened in 1914, and Mrs West appointed librarian. During her period of office the library developed from a membership of 100, until at the time of her leaving it had grown to 750 members at Fairlie and 400 at district depots.

In 1945, the Mackenzie County free library was the only one of its kind in New Zealand. The Auckland city library was run on similar lines, but the Mackenzie was the only county library to provide such facilities for its scattered and isolated residents. As well as the main library at Fairlie, there were distributing depots at Albury, Mona Vale, Cave, Kimbell, Skipton, Cricklewood, Tekapo, Pukaki and Irishman Creek, all served by a packet service from Fairlie. At Albury, for example, there were 120 readers, and

twenty to thirty packets were exchanged every week. The library at Albury was open one afternoon a week, and arrangements were made for books to be delivered at Mount Nessing, Rocky Gully and Ma Waro. Twenty readers in eight families at Cricklewood received books from Fairlie. There was also a monthly packet service to Lake Pukaki, and during the winter months there were twenty-four members at Irishman Creek. Books were also sent direct to various country stations. The library was supplied with 700 books by the Country Library Service, changeable half-yearly.

In her last annual report, Mrs West said that 47,696 books had been issued during the year, fiction 37,094, and non-fiction 10,602. Special books could be obtained on request, and these had included books on the trapping of animals, the setting and making of traps, the problems of beekeepers, poisonous weeds and stock troubles, brickmaking suitable for Mackenzie County soil, knitting raw wool into blankets, and there had been other requests relating to public speaking, rock gardens, ancient art, and wireless.

A representative gathering was present at the De Luxe Theatre to farewell Mrs West prior to her taking up residence in the North Island. Mrs A. H. Gillingham, presiding, said she had been a friend to every organisation in the Mackenzie. Mrs C. J. Isitt mentioned that she had been first president of the Fairlie W.W.S.A. Mrs A. D. Mackenzie acknowledged Mrs West's interest in the formation of women's institutes throughout the country. Mr C. V. Kirke wished her a happy retirement. Mrs J. Trotter spoke on behalf of sports bodies and presented her with a cheque from the residents of the county. There were also other speakers who spoke of her service as librarian, and her interest in the welfare and progress of the whole district.

#### THE RURAL POLITICAL BIAS

*Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
And ancient forms of party strife;  
Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
With sweeter manners, purer laws.*

— Alfred Tennyson

Like other local bodies throughout South Canterbury, the Mackenzie County Council has not been divided into political parties. This does not mean that councillors have no political views or affiliations at the national level, as some of them have served party causes. Mr C. J. Talbot was a Liberal member of Parliament from 1914 to 1919, when he was defeated by Mr T. D. Burnett, the Reform Party candidate who remained in office until his death in 1941.

The swing which put the Labour Government into office in 1935 gave the Mackenzie County a Labour member of Parliament in the person of Mr David Barnes, who was ousted three years later by Mr David Campbell Kidd, even though there was still a huge political landslide in favour of Labour. The clear-cut division between National and Labour is shown in two letters which appeared in the *Timaru Herald* just before the 1946 election. The Labour candidate was Mr W. R. Davison, who had served on the Mackenzie County Council, and had been its chairman.

The first letter was signed "Elector", and said: "Is it any wonder that the

Federated Farmers have so much trouble and so little success in organising the producers, when we find a farmer like Mr W. R. Davison standing as a Labour candidate, and supporting a Government which has opposed the Federated Farmers on all occasions? It is almost impossible to imagine any farmer giving support to such a Government, let alone backing up its policy. One good point, however, emerges, that Mr Davison's effort will have little effect on Mr Kidd's campaign. "Davey" is a faithful, sound and energetic supporter of the producers and should have no difficulty in getting a huge majority."

This letter produced a rejoinder, signed "Farmer's Wife". It said: "Would your disgruntled correspondent, 'Elector', like to prevent farmers from supporting the Labour Government? His surprise and indignation that they should do so are rather comic. However, in spite of all this sort of propaganda from the Conservatives, the intelligent working farmer knows that the Labour Government is his good friend. Many farmers, ready to walk off their farms when Labour came into office, were saved by readjustments of mortgages and are now prosperous. The wise stabilisation policy of Labour has stopped land values from sky-rocketing, and has kept the farming industry on an even keel. And for a more local instance of benefit to farmers, there is the Downlands Water Scheme, an inestimable boon to all within its radius. True, Mr Burnett originated the idea, but the Government he supported did nothing about it. It took a Labour Government and an energetic Minister of Public Works like Bob Semple to put the scheme into operation."

The voting in the 1946 election was Kidd 6922 and Davison 6133. Possibly with tongue in cheek in adding the last four words, the council resolved to congratulate Mr Kidd on his return to Parliament, on account of his past good services, apart from party considerations. Mr Davison challenged Mr Kidd unsuccessfully again in 1949. Political observers assume that country districts are traditionally conservative, returning candidates to the political right, whereas urban areas are more likely to go to the left. The Mackenzie County has fairly consistently conformed to this pattern.

#### FAIRLIE TOWN HALL PROJECT

The question of raising funds for a new hall was tentatively raised again in October 1945, when the council refused, on the casting vote of the chairman (Mr C. V. Kirke), a request from the Mackenzie County Agricultural and Pastoral Association for the use of Aorangi Hall on Easter Monday, should it not be required for patriotic purposes. As the request was turned down, Mr Kirke said he considered that it might be opportune for the council to take the opportunity to use the night to raise funds for the provision of a new hall.

At the January 1946 meeting, Mr S. S. Wreford wrote, stating that he was giving notice that the lease of Aorangi Hall to the council would terminate on 9th February. He would offer to sell the property to the council at the Government valuation of £1675, furniture and fittings extra. If the council was prepared to install water and sewerage a further lease would be considered. It was decided not to consider purchasing the hall at the price asked, but a committee was formed to meet Mr Wreford with a view to arriving at some agreement to keep the hall in use. An interesting development took place at the March meeting of the council. The chairman reported that the committee

set up to interview the trustees of the Wreford estate advised that no settlement had been arrived at, except that the trustees would allow the hall to be used for the entertaining of returned servicemen.

Mr Kirke moved that an offer of £1200 be made for the hall including extras, that the sum be loaned from the estate at 4% interest, that a charge of 1/- per head be made from those attending dances at the hall to finance the purchase, and that the usual hall rent be charged. The motion lapsed for want of a seconder.

It was then decided to call a public meeting to see whether the hall was required by the people as a public hall, and if so to set up a committee to find means of financing, managing and maintaining the hall. About forty residents attended, and unanimously agreed that a hall was necessary. After it was disclosed that there was £3000 in the Fairlie Improvement Fund, it was decided that the council be asked to call a special meeting of ratepayers to discuss the financing and purchasing of the hall. It was also recommended that an endeavour be made to purchase the hall.

No objections were lodged by ratepayers, and a special meeting of the council on 11th March 1947 agreed to raise a loan of £1800 at  $3\frac{3}{4}\%$  for eighteen years. The meeting required to confirm the resolution was held on 11th April, but the council then deferred the purchase until a special committee, representative of the various district organisations, was set up to administer the property. The council also agreed to advance up to £800 to put the hall in order, but the special committee must give assurance that the money would be repaid. Members of the Fairlie Riding were deputed to take steps to elect the committee.

A committee of fifteen members was formed and called the Fairlie Hall Committee, comprising Messrs W. B. Trotter (chairman), A. Carlton (secretary), P. J. Keenan, T. Guinnessy, A. J. Withers, J. Macdonald, F. Miles, A. Edward, J. A. Bate, J. Braddick, S. Guard, T. K. Clarke, J. Gallen, W. G. Black and A. Pryde, with the intention of building it up to twenty-four members by the inclusion of representatives in the town. The committee pledged itself to work hard to manage the hall successfully, and repay the money advanced. The hall was bought for £1750 including the land, fittings and furniture.

In January 1948, work was started on remodelling the hall. The contractors (Foden Brothers) had removed the upstairs rooms and balcony, to enable the floor space to be increased, and up-to-date lounges for men and women to be provided. The frontage of the hall was also to be improved, and large entrance doors and ticket box installed. The supper room was rebuilt, and the provision of an up-to-date kitchen, with electric water heating and a servery, making the task easier for a large number of persons. It was stated that alterations to the stage and dressing rooms were to be undertaken at a later date. It was also stated that when the improvements were completed, the hall would be a credit to the town, and would provide a convenient place for concerts, drama, dances, indoor sports and rifle shooting.

In 1948 the Businessmen's Association sponsored a full-scale queen carnival to raise money for local objectives, with a sports queen, a domain queen and a hall queen. The carnival extended over three months with an objective of £2000, but the final result was that £3676 was raised. Miss June Carlton, the

sports queen, was crowned in an impressive ceremony in the Aorangi Hall in July, more than 750 people attending. The other two contestants were Misses Noreen Anniss and Mary Edwards.

Finally, in August, Mr W. B. Trotter informed the council that after receiving its share of the queen carnival funds, added to its ordinary revenue, and after paying all its debts, including the hall renovation and loan charges due, the committee would have a credit balance of just over £400, and the loan of £1800 had been reduced to £1700.

### FLOOD PREVENTION AT FAIRLIE

On 25th January 1946, the council received a copy of a report by the engineer of the Catchment Board, Mr W. E. Lucy, on a scheme to prevent flooding in Fairlie from the Fairlie Creek. The idea was to run Fairlie Creek into the Irishman Creek just above the township, and to deviate the combined creeks where they would cross the state highway. This would necessitate a new highway bridge. The scheme was estimated to cost £1830, without the highway bridge, the cost of which would be borne by the Main Highways Board. It was also thought that the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council would subsidise £2 for £1, leaving one-third of the cost, namely £610, to be found locally from a proposed special rating area.

The chairman said the catchment board wanted to know if the county would contribute anything from its general fund, and whether it would suggest an assessor to classify the land in the special rating area. Cr P. J. Keenan said that a rate between  $\frac{1}{4}d$  and  $\frac{3}{4}d$  would be necessary in the special area, and by the time preliminary costs were met the local share would be about £850. The council then made a grant of £250 to the catchment board from the general fund towards the cost of dealing with the flooding at Fairlie Creek. The appointing of an assessor was left in the hands of the Fairlie Riding members.

In January 1947, the chairman said the catchment board had been unable to persuade the Main Highways Board to increase the waterway at Irishman Creek bridge, this being necessary before the much needed deviation of Fairlie Creek could be carried out.

In June Mr Lucy said he hoped to reduce the original estimate to about £1000, but could not estimate the job until it was known what standard of bridge on Nixon's Crossing was required. There was only a light traffic bridge further up Nixon's Road, and if the present Alloway Street bridge were replaced with a culvert and shifted up, it would provide a cheap bridge. The council accepted a bridge over Nixon's Road of a width of 8ft 6in, provided it was well built and of durable materials, and designed to take a ten-ton motor lorry and traffic generally. In October, payment of the £250 to the catchment board was authorised.

On 1st March 1948, the engineer was directed, on a proposal to put the Fairlie water supply pipeline on the Irishman Creek bridge, to report fully on the Irishman Creek crossing, and also on a pipe crossing on Bains Creek, with a view to taking the pipes across the new bridge when constructed. In August the proposal to bring the new pipeline on to the new Bains Crossing bridge was adopted, and the engineer instructed to apply for a subsidy from the Main Highways Board for the Bains Crossing. Cr W. B. Trotter confirmed that the catchment board would consider subsidising the Irishman Creek crossing.

In September advice was received that the catchment board had agreed to subsidise the work of putting the supply pipes on Irishman Creek bridge up to an estimate of £320. The Soil Conservation Council would subsidise the job (as part of the Fairlie Creek deviation) at £2 for £1, and the board would subsidise the balance £1 for £1, leaving the council with one-sixth of the cost. In April 1949, the council was still seeking permission from the Main Highways Board to lay the Fairlie water supply pipes over Irishman Creek bridge on No. 60 Highway.

Progress must have been slow, as in December 1950 the clerk said that no reply had been received from the catchment board to his letter pointing out that the work in connection with the water supply pipeline at Irishman Creek crossing was still very necessary, and asked the board to keep to its original agreement and subsidise the cost. The consulting engineer (Mr Milward) said that the board's engineer had no objections to putting the pipeline below the creek bed.

#### HARBOUR AND HOSPITAL RATES

On 17th April 1946, a circular was received from the Waitemata County Council advocating an immediate counties conference to obtain relief from hospital levies. The chairman (Mr Kirke) said the Government intended to legislate in June, when no doubt some relief would be given. The conference was held in September, the chairman reporting that it had been decided to press for a reduction in hospital rating as advocated by the Parliamentary Committee of Local Government, naming the basis of the average rates between 1935/36 and 1938/39, and not the uniform 0.5d as recently announced by the Government. The Prime Minister (Mr Fraser) promised consideration of relief that year. The chairman said the hospital levy was £5648, but would be £2490 by the parliamentary committee report, and £4168 under the uniform  $\frac{1}{2}$ d in the £ scheme.

The Government's determination to fix a uniform  $\frac{1}{2}$ d in the £ prevailed, and the percentage of total rates levied for the hospital and harbour boards was still a constant source for concern. The rapid increase in harbour rates was commented on by the chairman in April 1947. When the hospital rate was stabilised, the council had looked forward to more money being spent on roads. However, any possible balance that would have been available to the council had been offset by the increase in the harbour rate. The clerk said that the extra harbour rate had almost exactly balanced the amount of relief from the hospital levy that year.

The harbour rate for 1947 was 13/32d in the £1. Heavy expenditure on the dredge was given as the reason for the increase. The previous year's rate of  $\frac{1}{4}$ d in the £1 was £2188, but this year £3555, an increase of £1367. The hospital levy was £4376 as against £5748, a saving of £1372. The following year the county rates were estimated at £17,555, of which hospital and harbour board were £7819, approximately 44 $\frac{1}{2}$ % of the total.

#### KAKAS AND KEAS

"Would you know the difference between a kaka beak and a kea beak?" asked the chairman of the Mackenzie County Council (Mr C. V. Kirke) when considering a letter from the Internal Affairs Department on 2nd August 1946. The letter explained that under the Animals Protection and Game Act the

kaka was protected, and the department was concerned at the illicit shooting of these birds. Kaka beaks had been handed in with kea beaks when application was made for the subsidy. The department said it would be appreciated if the council's officer who received beaks, and arranged for payment of a bonus, would keep a close watch to ascertain that, if any kaka beaks were submitted, the matter should be reported to the department.

The engineer-clerk (Mr T. Moorhouse): I would not be able to distinguish a kaka beak from a kea beak.

The chairman: In any case I do not think there are any kakas in our district. There might be some near the Hermitage, but I doubt it.

"The Director of the Dominion Museum advises that kaka beaks are easily distinguished from those of keas, as they are proportionately higher, and have a distinctly sinuosity on the lower mandible," added the department's letter. It was said that keas may legally be destroyed because they constitute a menace to sheep, whereas kakas do not offend in this respect.

In November 1946, the council advertised that in future, in order to collect kea beak subsidy, it would be necessary to produce both the upper and the lower beak, or preferably the head.

#### LINEN FLAX HOSTEL

In October 1946, a move was made by the Mackenzie Returned Services Association to have the hostel formerly occupied by employees of the linen flax factory retained for housing returned servicemen, rather than have it transferred to the Hermitage as was being proposed. A deputation was appointed to see the Hon. Mr Semple, and another to seek the co-operation of the Mackenzie County Council. The hostel was described as a seven-roomed wooden building with a large sunporch, two bathrooms and a double wash-house. It was originally built by Dr J. R. Loughnan as a private hospital, and was used as such for several years. When the linen flax factory was opened, it was taken over as a hostel for employees, but for the previous eighteen months it had been unoccupied. Several attempts had been made by persons and organisations to acquire the building, but without avail.

On 1st November, a deputation urged the council to take steps to endeavour to prevent the hostel from being moved from Fairlie, and to endeavour to have it made available for housing.

After the deputation withdrew, the chairman told the council that he had received an unsatisfactory reply from Mr Semple to the effect that alterations would cost too much. He also understood that the new doctor who was replacing Dr Wells was interested in acquiring the hostel as a private hospital, as there was no mention of a new hospital for Fairlie in the ten-year regional plan. He had also seen the Hon. C. F. Skinner who said that the State Housing Department could not take over the hostel for housing.

It was moved by Mr C. V. Kirke, and seconded by Mr W. B. Trotter, that the council, strongly supported by the local medical practitioner, the local branch of the R.S.A., and other sections of the community, request the Government to retain in Fairlie the building recently occupied as a linen flax hostel, for the following purposes: (1) temporary homes for ex-servicemen until such times as houses are built, and (2) after that as a cottage hospital for Fairlie. The motion also added that the temporary housing be supervised

by, and at the expense of, the Housing Department or Rehabilitation Board, or both. Further, if this proposition is not acceptable to the Government, the Government be requested to give the council an option over the building until the next council meeting, with a view to the latter taking it over under the transit housing scheme.

In December a most favourable reply was received from the Public Works Department. The department did not operate transit houses, as that was vested in local bodies. The department could not give the hostel to the council, but was prepared to make it available free of charge for ten years, at the end of which time the assets would revert to the Crown. The council could subdivide the hostel as it wished and fix its own rental, but the department could not promise that it would be used as a hospital. A rough estimate showed that to convert the hostel into two flats would cost at least £100.

In March 1947, arrangements were made for the War Assets Realisation Board to hand over the hostel to the council, and two servicemen, one of Cricklewood and one of Fairlie, were accepted as returned servicemen tenants on the recommendation of the (Fairlie) R.S.A.

#### IMPROVING FAIRLIE'S WATER SUPPLY

A meeting of the Fairlie Riding ratepayers and residents, called by the council, was held in Aorangi Hall on 1st November 1947 to discuss proposed alterations and improvements to the water supply. The matter had been giving the council some concern, and although there was an unlimited supply of pure water at the Three Springs, a method of bringing an increased supply to Fairlie was being considered. The engineer said there was a considerable wastage through winter, caused by residents leaving their taps running, and also leaks in the pipeline had been detected. There was a delivery from the reservoir of 76,000 gallons a day. With increased demand for water, and to allow a safe margin for all purposes, it was desirable that 130,000 a day should be provided. He had considered six different methods to do this, and gave an outline of the three most practicable. These were: (a) a 6in pipeline from Three Springs to the reservoir (this would give a daily supply of 318,000 gallons, and would cost about £10,000 to install); (b) a 4in pipeline from Three Springs to the reservoir, a scheme which was estimated to cost £8000, and would give a supply of 200,000 gallons a day, and (c) the drawing of water from a suitable water race by means of 8in pipes (this scheme would probably cost about £2000 and would give a supply of more than 500,000 gallons a day). The third scheme could be put into operation only if the Health Department gave a favourable report after extensive tests.

Mr H. G. Royds, civil engineer, of Christchurch, said, "Probably the population of Fairlie is now less than 1000, and it is difficult to believe that for ordinary purposes, every man, woman and child needs 80 gallons of water every day, or say 320 gallons for each household. Obviously, there is excess use for gardening." The obvious remedy was to provide water meters; if people were willing to pay for garden irrigation, they were entitled to have it. He suggested that a 4in pipeline would not cost anything like £8000. He did not like the water race scheme, and suggested building a large earth reservoir.

On 12th November 1948, the council received a report from the Medical Officer of Health (Dr G. L. McLeod), approving of a sample of water taken

from the property of Mr F. M. Larcombe. Dr McLeod said that investigations to find a pure sample of water had gone on for some time, and he was pleased to report that some finality had been made. The engineer's next task was to take a test volume to ensure that the supply from this source was adequate all the year round, and the present water supply for Fairlie would be augmented to provide a supply of pure water for the township.

On 10th June 1949, Mr Kirke stated that a committee had considered the engineer's report on obtaining water from Larcombe's property. The committee recommended the scheme for 9in diameter pipes estimated at £1800, that the scheme be put to the ratepayers, and if favourably received a loan be raised for the work. The public meeting was duly called, and it was unanimously approved, a poll to be taken to raise a loan of £2300 for twenty-five years. The engineer was then instructed to advertise the council's intention to apply for permission to raise a loan for £2250, to construct an auxiliary water supply from the source of underground water found on Larcombe's property, to the present break pressure tank on No. 60 State Highway, a distance of approximately thirty chains, by 8in or 9in pipes, and also to construct deviations of the main pipeline over the Bains Crossing and Irishman Creek bridges, such loan to be for a period of twenty-five years, at a rate of interest not exceeding 3½%, and to be totally repayable within the period of the loan. No objections were received as a result of the advertisement.

At the November 1950 meeting of the council, the clerk read a petition signed by forty ratepayers of the Fairlie township area, protesting against the augmenting of the high pressure water supply by an auxiliary piped and chlorinated supply from the present water race to the reservoir. They considered supplying the township with chlorinated water a retrograde step, especially as there was a pure water supply available, and that was promised to ratepayers when the scheme was inaugurated. They realised that something must be done to supplement the water supply, and suggested that before supplying chlorinated water, a scheme to have water pumped from a well in the vicinity of the holding tank be investigated. They believed such a scheme would be feasible, and would give a supply of pure water at low cost. The council decided that as they had given all other sources of supply careful consideration, the petitioners' objection to chlorination was not sufficient to further delay such urgent work.

Then, in September 1951, there was another debate as to whether 9in or 6in pipes should be used. The consulting engineer, Mr G. R. Milward, said that 6in pipes could be obtained fairly readily, and would under present costs allow the scheme to be completed within the limits of the £3000 loan for the purpose. The 6in pipes would give a supply about five times the volume to the town. Cr W. B. Trotter said he was not happy with the 6in pipes, and, supported by the chairman (Mr Kirke), the council decided that even though they had to struggle through the next summer they preferred to wait and secure the pipes that would give them a sure supply for the future. "I would like to see the new system installed not only for this generation," said Cr P. J. Keenan. "The extra expense for the pipes would be covered by the extra sales of water which we would be able to make."

In July 1952, a quotation of £480 from Messrs Cory, Wright and Salmon for complete chlorination plant ex rail Christchurch was accepted, the firm

being asked to supervise the installation. In February 1953, the State Advances Corporation agreed to take up the Fairlie Water Supply Augmentation Loan (1951) provided the money was uplifted before 31st March.

#### LAKE TEKAPO EXTRA URBAN AREA

A special meeting of the Mackenzie County Council was held at Takapo House, Lake Tekapo, on 6th May 1949, to consider a partial planning scheme to zone the Tekapo Extra Urban Area, and the production of a code of planning by-law clauses. The chairman (Mr C. V. Kirke) said the idea of planning the area went back about eighteen years when Dr L. S. Talbot and Mr J. F. D. Jeune enthusiastically advocated the move. Mr R. G. Dick, chairman of the Tekapo Planning Technical Committee, told the council that the main possibilities of Tekapo were as a health resort, as a camping resort, and as a winter sports resort. Dr E. G. Stubbs, who was a member of the Tekapo Planning Commission, thought present freehold land should be made available for use as a lakeside park, and suggested present owners be given others sections and accept leasehold.

After lunch the council was addressed by Dr Talbot, as chairman of the Tekapo Planning Commission, and a member of the technical committee. He said there were many classes of people who would want to live at Tekapo such as: (1) permanent residents such as retired people; (2) permanent residents who had jobs in Tekapo; (3) people who wanted baches; and (4) campers at a motor camp. Dr Talbot said he had seen the Minister of Health (the Hon. Mabel Howard) about a health hostel for mildly subnormal children, but the minister visualised a large institution which Dr Talbot said was not necessary nor desirable. Tekapo was free from insect pests which marred other tourist resorts. There was room for a good land plane aerodrome, and the lake for sea planes. The commission had in mind acquiring the Works Department houses for baches when the department left Tekapo. The council should ask the State Hydro-electric Department to hold the spare sections in its village for health school hostel purposes.

Dr Talbot suggested a conference of certain State departments and other bodies. He thought the need for two small health school hostels — not for advanced cases of tuberculosis — should be stressed, and also camping facilities for winter sports, and fishing. As for local government, he said that the county council could buy the land at farm values cheap, and sell or lease at larger (town) values which would help development. He urged the council to try to take over certain areas, and said the Extra Urban Authority should control a strip all round the lake, and this would stop rival settlement.

After discussion, the council decided to advertise, asking for those who desired to build at Tekapo to inform the council. The advertisement asked whether the sections would be required for permanent residence, or for a weekend cottage or bach. Following Dr Talbot's suggestion, it was decided to arrange a conference in Wellington of the Health, Internal Affairs, Tourist, Lands and Survey, Works, State Hydro departments, and Main Highways Board, and that Mr D. C. Kidd, M.P., and Mr Harper, under-secretary to the Department of Internal Affairs, be asked to arrange a date among the departments. Mr Kidd was also asked to see the Minister of Works (Mr Semple) and press for a decision as to the fate of Takapo House, which would



MACKENZIE COUNTY COUNCIL, 1980-1983

Back Row: W. D. Belcher (County Overseer), Cr. A. B. Smith, J. R. Fougere (Consulting Engineer), Crs. D. W. Moyes, J. R. Simpson, C. A. Gallagher, N. C. Anderson, D. Dann, B. Scott.

Front Row: B. J. Dwyer (County Clerk), Crs. B. J. O'Neill (Chairman), B. L. Chapman, J. de B. Galwey.



B. J. DWYER, COUNTY CLERK, 1963-1983



MACKENZIE COUNTY COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION STAFF, 1983  
Miss R. Cotton, Mr J. E. Hey, Mrs M. C. Gibson, Mr B. J. Dwyer, Miss H. McDuff.

either have to be protected from the flooding when the lake was raised, or would have to be rebuilt on a higher site which seemed favourable.

On 12th August 1949, the sharing of cost of amenities to be provided for the State Hydro-electric Department's village was discussed by the council, when a report was given of a meeting between the Works and Hydro-electric departments and council representatives in Christchurch. Mr T. Moorhouse (county engineer) said the village had to be built quickly, and the proposed lay-out was for forty-eight sections of which the State Hydro-electric Department and the Highways Board would occupy thirty, the balance of eighteen being available for general settlement, and for the building for the proposed health school hostel buildings. The scheme for the forty-eight sections was for water supply, sewerage, stormwater drainage, roading, tree planting, and a recreation area, the total cost of which would be £24,722. The department wanted to know whether the council would pay for a share of the cost of the scheme for the eighteen sections, about £7000.

The council decided that the Lands and Survey Department be allowed the eighteen sections to be valued and become rateable separately, and that an endeavour be made to reduce the council's share of the cost from £7000 to about £4000, which they considered would be a truer figure. Mr Moorhouse was instructed to urge the Minister of Health to take, say, two of the eighteen sections as a site for a health school hostel, and to enquire about holding a conference between the Government departments and the Tekapo Planning Commission.

In August 1950, Dr L. S. Talbot suggested that the new mayor of Timaru (Mr W. L. Richards) and Cr John Scott be appointed to the Tekapo Planning Commission, to fill vacancies caused by the deaths of Mr A. E. S. Hanan and Cr B. N. Murray. In October Mr T. Moorhouse, who had resigned as engineer to the council during the year, was also appointed to the commission.

### CONSULTING ENGINEERS APPOINTED

On 12th May 1950, the engineer-clerk, Mr T. Moorhouse, resigned his position to become engineer to the Waitaki County Council. After giving reasons for his decision, he said the council had treated him with consideration and fairness, and hoped he had given satisfactory service. The chairman, Mr C. V. Kirke, and Cr P. J. Keenan said that Mr Moorhouse had given of his best, and this was appreciated. He took up his new post in August.

One legacy of Mr Moorhouse's term of office was his innovation in the minutes of council meetings of referring to members as councillors, abbreviated to Cr in the singular, instead of Messrs and Mr, although the chairman was still referred to as Mr. The writer of this book has made the change at this point.

The chairman said there appeared to be three courses open to the council to replace Mr Moorhouse: (1) appoint another engineer-clerk, (2) appoint an engineer and a clerk, (3) engage the services of a consulting engineer and appoint a clerk. A motion to call for applications for alternative positions of engineer and engineer-clerk was lost, and then a motion to call for a county engineer was carried. There were no applications, the chairman suggesting that a consulting engineer be appointed.

In July the firm of Bridges and Milward, consulting engineers and surveyors, of Timaru, were appointed to the position, Mr G. R. Milward to attend monthly meetings of the council and give minor advice or consultation as may be necessary from time to time. For this service they would be paid a retainer. All engineering and surveying services, and board, meals and travelling expenses incurred were to be paid.

Mr James Somers, previously assistant county clerk, was promoted to the position of county clerk, rate collector and returning officer.

### FAIRLIE COUNTY TOWN

Although Fairlie was officially declared a county town as from 5th September 1955, quite a tortuous procedure preceded the event covering about four and a half years. As far back as 5th February 1951, the council considered a report from the county clerk, Mr Somers, on the alternatives open to the residents of Fairlie regarding their future as a separate township. Mr Somers said that to form a town board with a town the size of Fairlie would be uneconomical, as the cost of administration, and the initial cost of necessary plant would be too high. The council had the power on a petition signed by the majority of ratepayers in a specified area to declare that area to be a county township, and to appoint a committee of not less than three, nor more than seven ratepayers, to make recommendations on matters affecting the development of the township. It also gave the council power to levy additional rates up to 3d in the £ on capital value for the development and improvement of the area.

The county clerk made an interesting observation. He said that a town like Fairlie tended to interrupt the advancement of the county. With the high price prevailing for primary produce, the average farmer was in a better position to pay a reasonably high rate, and thereby allow the county finances to be put in a sound position, whereas residents in the town were, in the main, wage-earners on a fixed income, who did not obtain as direct a benefit from the increased prices as the farmers do, and therefore feel an increase in rates another heavy burden. He thought the proposed committee of ratepayers of a county township should be given the status of a separate governing body, under the general control of the county administration.

### RATING SYSTEMS

In the meantime the Fairlie Businessmen's Association sponsored a move to ascertain if the county would prefer unimproved value rating instead of capital value. In October, the council advertised that it received a petition from more than 15% of ratepayers, and that a poll would be taken on 10th November 1951. Naturally there were many statements for and against, and letters to the newspaper. Mr Kirke said he was concerned at the instability an alteration to the unimproved system would give the council. It would be awkward to finance the Fairlie township if the proposal were carried. The brunt of the burden would be on ratepayers outside the township. When the poll was taken, the alteration was rejected by 525 votes to 365, but of significance is the fact that at the Fairlie polling booth the proposition was 188 in favour and 88 against.

#### MACKENZIE COUNCIL SPONSORS LEGISLATION

However, the matter did not rest at that point. In June 1952, the Counties Association considered a remit from the Mackenzie County Council concerning county towns which would administer the county rate to be spent within the township. A township committee would be formed, and would assume responsibility for its own affairs. Mr Kirke said the Internal Affairs Department were interested in the proposal.

#### LEGISLATION ENACTED

At the November 1952 meeting, Mr Kirke said he was pleased to report that the Government had passed an amendment authorising the formation of county townships along the lines suggested by the Mackenzie County Council. If Fairlie were to establish a county township, the residents could decide their own affairs, and have their own system of rating, unimproved or capital value as desired. The amendment would lead to a more democratic way of managing county townships, and should create general satisfaction in the district.

#### COUNTY TOWN FORMED

It was not until 1955 that steps were taken to form a county town. A public notice was given by Messrs A. W. Barwood and N. B. Connolly that it was their intention to present a petition to the council that the Fairlie town area be constituted a county town, and that a county town committee be appointed. A special meeting of the council on 5th August passed the necessary resolution, which was confirmed on 2nd September, that Fairlie be a county town from 5th September 1955.

#### FIRST ELECTION OF MEMBERS

The election of members took place on 8th February 1956, six members being required. The polling was: Terrence M. O'Brien, 159; Alfred A. H. Pinkerton, 152; Bertha L. Crichton, 137; William K. Harris, 122; Patrick B. Gallen, 116; Kenneth C. Tubb, 116; William H. Heads, 97; and Thomas K. Clarke, 67. The first six were elected. Meetings of the committee would be held monthly a week before council meetings, and the county clerk would be secretary of the committee. In March the council confirmed the committee, with the addition of Cr W. A. Mackintosh as chairman.

#### LOCHABER ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

In 1944, improvements to Lochaber Road were planned, but apparently there was dilatoriness on the part of the Public Works Department which held up the development. In February 1944, the department was asked if the matter could be expedited, but it was not until March 1946 that some definite move was forthcoming. The department advised that the latest estimate for carrying out the proposed improvement was £2600, a rise of £800 on the £1800 previously estimated. The department then asked if the council and Mr Beattie would find the increased amount on a £2 to £1 subsidy.

The clerk reported that as the department had pressed for an early reply, he had consulted the chairman, and as a result had written to all the previous contributors asking if they would contribute a higher amount pro rata to the previous share ratio. The clerk also reported that, since then, he was told that

there was some doubt as to whether the part needing improvement was in the Mackenzie County, also that the back part of Orari Station was being sold and would have sole access by the road. It seemed that the subsidy was at a low ratio, considering that all Mr Beattie's land was Crown land. It was decided to ask the department if it had investigated the route down the Orari Gorge, and that the council would want to know this before consideration of paying more.

On 17th April 1946, the Geraldine County Council intimated that it would pay to the Mackenzie council road rates from Messrs Beattie, Mackenzie Brothers, and the estate of Tripp Brothers, amounting to £50 for five years, and enquired if other contributors had agreed to pay the suggested increase towards improvements as their offer to do so still stood. It was resolved that Mr Beattie be asked to give his written consent to pay his share of the increased cost, and that if such consent is obtained, that the Public Works Department be notified that the council will find the extra cost.

However, the following month, the chairman reported that he understood that Mr Beattie of Lochaber Road had persuaded the Minister of Works to grant the entire increase in the cost of the work of improvement.

#### IMPROVEMENTS COMPLETED

Procedure must have been as slow as ever, for in November 1947 Mr Kirke said that the council had deposited a sum with the Public Works Department in order that improvements may be carried out on the road. Then, in December 1948, in an annual report, he said, "In the Opuha Riding, with the assistance of a Government grant, considerable improvements have been made to the Lochaber road. It should be pointed out that repairs on this road are principally for the ratepayers in the Geraldine county who have recently settled there. However, provided that the necessary finance is made available, and that the ratepayers of the Mackenzie do not have to be neglected, this council will do all it can to give these settlers better access."

#### FLOOD DAMAGE

Heavy flooding in 1951 did approximately £10,000 worth of damage to roads and bridges, but Lochaber Road caused a special problem. "Although the Lochaber homestead is not in our county, we are concerned about this road, which in recent years has had several thousands of pounds spent on it, but as a result of the April floods, was damaged beyond recognition," said the chairman, Mr Kirke. "It appears that only substantial Government grants will enable us to meet the huge expenditure needed to give a reasonable access to these settlers, who occupy sparsely populated areas of low rateable value. Even then it is most difficult to obtain the materials necessary to carry out these works."

It was not until February 1953 that the Geraldine County Council forwarded a copy of a report on Lochaber Road, and asked the council to contribute £300 towards the cost of the works. The proposal would be financed: Ministry of Works £3000, Beattie and Buick £400, Geraldine County Council £300, Mackenzie County Council £300; total £4000. The council agreed to limit its contribution to £150, and to endeavour to increase the land-owners' contributions.

## ASHWICK - OPUHA WATER RACE

In August 1949, the council decided to declare as a water race district areas of the Cattle Valley and Trentham districts. These were the existing Ashwick division of the Fairlie Riding Water Race District, plus an additional area in the Ashwick district. In September a special order was passed to this end, confirmed on 14th October, and operating from 17th October.

There was a dispute over water charges, resolved by dividing the district into two rateable divisions, Trentham and Ashwick, constituted as from 12th July 1950. The proposed divisions were duly advertised, and there were no objections. When it came to the rating year ended 31st April 1951, the maintenance rate for the Trentham division was 3d per acre over the whole area, and in the Ashwick division all the area classified "A" 2d per acre, "B" 1½d per acre, and "C" ¼d per acre, together with a basic charge of £3 per consumer on all rateable properties in the district.

Then, on 6th April 1951, the council enacted a by-law entitled The Mackenzie County Water Race Districts By-law 1951, stating that it applied to the whole area of the land in the Ashwick-Opuha Water Race District, and in such water race districts as may be constituted in the Mackenzie County.

On 10th August, Mr H. A. Bray presented to the council objections to the construction of the Trentham division of the water races. His objections were set out under ten headings, the final one being that for the considerable expense involved absolutely no benefit to settlers lower down would be gained, and he objected to paying for something where no benefit was to be gained.

The consulting engineer (Mr Milward), the county clerk (Mr Somers), and the foreman (Mr Guinnessy) met a Mr Sloane on the subject. The clerk said the race could not be constructed on any route other than that chosen by Mr Milward, and that it would seem that Mr Bray was confused with the issues involved, namely, land drainage and a water race, and if the water race was to be maintained economically, stormwater must be prevented from entering it. The objections were declared by the council to be insufficient to warrant abandoning the scheme. Mr Somers said he felt that Mr Bray would probably claim compensation for the paddocks concerned.

In October and November 1951, the usual procedure went through to declare a separate division of the Ashwick-Opuha Water Race District to be known as the Mount Michael division. This new division comprised all that land occupied by Messrs B. J. O'Neill, A. J. Salt, H. A. Bray, I. R. Drummond, C. V. Kirke, D. E. Nelson and Pringle Brothers.

The rates for 1952-1953 were the same as above, except that the basic charge was raised from £3 per consumer to £6, and there was a construction rate of £18 per consumer in the Mount Michael division. However, the rates went up the following year to Trentham division, 4½d an acre, Ashwick "A" 3d, "B" 2½d, and "C" ¾d an acre. The basic charge remained at £6 but the Mount Michael construction charge was not repeated.

## AORANGI HALL GUTTED BY FIRE

That Fairlie had developed a community spirit was demonstrated in the reaction of the people to the disastrous fire that gutted Aorangi Hall in June 1953. The fire brigade are credited with making an excellent save of the hall. A special meeting of the hall committee was called by the county clerk for

29th June to consider repairs to the fire damage. It was decided there and then that the works committee consider ways and means of rebuilding on the same plan as the original building, with further improvements if finance were available. In the meantime, a working bee was invited to assist the committee to clear the fire debris the following Saturday.

In August the county clerk reported that repairs and improvements to the fire-damaged hall had been considered by the hall committee. It was agreed to extend the hall 15ft to enable a complete new stage to be built. The estimated cost was £2700. The money available was £2200, leaving from £500 to £700 to be raised. A subscription was opened to defray the cost. The chairman of the hall committee, Cr P. J. Keenan, said the committee was attempting something it thought it could do. They were adding 900 square feet to the area of the hall, improving ventilation and lighting, and the acoustic properties. Mr C. V. Kirke advertised an appeal for funds, and the R.S.A. held a debutantes' ball, the proceeds from which (£77) was paid to the building fund. The council made a grant of £40.

The hall was opened on 12th February 1954, the programme including a welcome home to Squadron Leader C. L. Seigert, D.F.C., A.F.C., M.V.O., and Mrs Seigert. On the platform was Flight Lieutenant Carter, D.F.C., representing the R.N.Z.A.F. More than 500 people attended the opening, and all present enjoyed the modern facilities provided, and an excellent dance floor.

The official opening was performed by the county chairman, Mr C. V. Kirke, who said the new hall would remain an example of excellent and unselfish community effort. The district now possessed a large well-appointed town hall, which he believed was second to none in any rural area. Practically all the work of rebuilding had been carried out by local tradesmen. Materials had been landed on the job at cost, and building firms had worked in the daytime at minimum cost, and had organised working bees, working themselves free of cost in the evenings. Electricians, painters and decorators had given freely of their time, and the interior, finished in seven blended pastel shades, was a credit to those who did the work.

The reconstructed hall had been increased in area by 900 square feet. There was now 400 square feet of staging, and a dance floor of approximately 100 feet by 40 feet, accommodating about 700 dancers. The supper room would accommodate 150 persons. At the opening, relays of women undertook the serving of each supper sitting, and music for dancing was supplied by a local orchestra of five instruments.

#### RENEWED BRIDGES AND CULVERTS

Following the devastating floods of 1945, the big snow fall of 1946, and further flooding that inflicted more damage and held up works, little progress was made in repairing damage to roads and bridges. Then, from about September 1950 on, when Bridges and Milward were appointed engineering consultants to the council, progress was speeded up in this direction. Hereunder is the work undertaken to the end of 1953, and completed by May 1954.

#### SKIPTON BRIDGE

Just below the Skipton bridge is now a delightful spot for picnicking and swimming. The cost of the bridge was shared with the Geraldine County, and the Main Highways Board contributed £7500. In August 1951, the building

of this bridge to replace the temporary structure was held up pending a decision from the Ministry of Works as to whether a new concrete bridge would be built at Hanging Rock, as the stringers from this bridge would be used at Skipton.

In September, the contractors were having trouble with pile driving, and there was also the question of who should pay for the temporary bridge being debated. The Mackenzie council supported the Geraldine council in its contention that any money spent on the temporary bridge should be deducted from the amount the county had to pay for the new bridge.

On 7th March 1952, the Ministry of Works forwarded a copy of the estimated cost of the bridge, and set out the council's share at £4146/10/-, but this included £373 permanent bridge approaches, and reinstatement of the temporary bridge at £291/10/-. The Geraldine County Council objected to the approaches figure, as it was considered that these were part of the bridge. The Mackenzie County Council supported the objection.

In June 1952, the Commissioner of Works stated that there had been some misunderstanding in the matter, and agreed to the original fixed contribution of £3750 from each council. The Mackenzie County's contribution was met by way of loan. In September 1953, Mr Milward was able to report that it would not be long before the Skipton bridge on the main highway between Fairlie and Geraldine would be completed. "There is no doubt; it is a beautiful job," he said.

#### TEMPLES BRIDGE

This is a suspension bridge for stock, 168ft span and 3ft wide, over the Opuha River in the Opuha Gorge. On 2nd November 1951, a tender by the Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £1153/10/- was accepted. The bridge was completed in March 1952.

#### BURKE BRIDGE

This is a reinforced concrete three-span bridge, 75ft by 12ft, over the Opihi River on the Albury-Burkes Pass highway. On 2nd November 1951, a tender by Hodder Concrete Co. Ltd for £2967/6/2 was accepted. By September 1952 the contractors had made test piles, and a temporary ford had been put in by council plant. The bridge was completed in February 1953.

#### PRINGLES BRIDGE

This reinforced concrete bridge is situated on the Geraldine-Fairlie State Highway 79, and is three-span with dimensions 70ft by 24ft. On 7th December 1951, a tender by the Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £4233/18/1½, provided the cost of cement remained at £14/15/- a ton, was accepted. On 4th July 1952, it was reported that the stream deviation and temporary roads had been put in with council plant and labour, and the contractors had driven in the concrete test piles. The work was completed in December 1952. The previous bridge had been destroyed in the 1945 flood.

#### MANATON'S CUTTING CULVERT

This is on the Geraldine-Fairlie State Highway 79, and is at the foot of Manaton's Cutting. On 7th December 1951, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £808/11/- was accepted. On 4th July 1952 the work was completed, including the approach roads.

#### EWART'S BRIDGE

This crosses Ribbonwood Stream, Clayton Road. On 3rd December 1953, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £3326/14/- was accepted. This is a three-span reinforced concrete bridge totalling 75ft. It was completed about May 1954.

#### CLAYTON BRIDGE EXTENSION

This reinforced concrete bridge is situated on the north branch of the Opuha River on the Clayton Road. On 3rd December 1953, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £1399/17/6 was accepted. This was a 30ft span extension of an existing two-span concrete bridge. The work was completed about April 1954.

#### RAINCLIFF STREAM BRIDGE

This bridge is situated on Middle Valley Road adjacent to the Raincliff Church. On 3rd December 1953, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £3696/14/3 was accepted. This is a two-span reinforced concrete bridge totalling 100ft. It was completed about May 1954.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1944

##### TIMARU RADIO STATION

A petition from the Timaru Borough Council in reference to a proposed radio station in Timaru was made available for signature by ratepayers.

##### SOUTH CANTERBURY AIRPORT

In October, the Timaru Borough Council asked that a representative be appointed to attend a meeting to consider the formation of a suitable airport to serve the whole district. No action was taken. After a further appeal from the Chamber of Commerce, it was agreed that Mr P. J. Keenan be the council delegate.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1946

##### MRS D. JEUNE

The council sent a letter of congratulation to Mrs D. Jeune on being awarded the British Empire Medal. Mr Kirke said that Mrs Jeune had done valuable work during the war years.

##### HOSPITAL BOARD LEVY

The levy for the current year was £5747/11/4.

##### TALBOT STREET

In June, Gorge Road, Fairlie, was renamed Talbot Street.

##### MR C. SEARLE

Mr C. Searle resigned after being employed by the council for about thirty years. In accepting the resignation with regret, the chairman said Mr Searle had always rallied round in times of emergency or special events, putting in long hours.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1947

### MISS J. M. DICK

Miss Dick resigned as assistant county clerk as at 24th December to get married. At a farewell occasion she was presented with an electric jug by members of the council.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1948

### SUBTERRANEAN WATER DIVINING

Mr T. G. Kinney, a water diviner, reported finding subterranean water near Fairlie water supply reservoir, and in Fairlie township. The engineer, Mr Moorhouse explained that Mr Kinney was engaged with his approval by Booth-Macdonald in order to get information to see if a pumping scheme was likely to be feasible. There was no guarantee that the council would meet the divining fee.

### ALEXANDER SEARLE SMITH

On 22nd June 1948, Mr Smith died in the Timaru hospital in his eighty-fifth year as a result of neck injuries through being thrown from a horse. He was a county councillor from 1908 to 1911, representing Fairlie Riding.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1949

### LIBRARIAN'S RESIGNATION

In February, Mrs D. J. Cook resigned as librarian. Mrs R. Elms became the new librarian.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1950

### FAIRLIE SWIMMING BATHS

The Education Department would not subsidise the maintenance of the Fairlie swimming baths, as they were not on a school site, and the Internal Affairs Department said that grants were not made under the Physical Welfare and Recreation Act for maintenance. Cr P. J. Keenan commented that it was the Education Department that should help, as swimming was a compulsory subject.

### CURTAILMENT OF WORKS IN COUNTY

In August, the council protested against the action of the Government in declining further subsidies under the Physical Welfare and Recreation Act, deferring the sealing of the Albury-Fairlie highway section of the state highway, and deferring the erection of the new post office.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1951

### NOXIOUS WEEDS

The council passed a special order that the following weeds be declared noxious throughout the whole of the Mackenzie County: (1) blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus* and *Rubus laciniatus*); (2) burdock (*Arctium*, and species); (3) hemlock (*Conium maculatum*); (4) nasella tussock (*Nasella trichotoma*); (5) nodding thistle (*Cardus nutans*); (6) St John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*); (7) saffron thistle (*Carthamus lanatus*); (8) sweetbriar (*Rosa rubiginosa*). The special order was confirmed on 7th September 1951.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1952

### FAIRLIE SWIMMING BATHS

In May a cheque for £250 was received from Art Union Funds for the maintenance of the swimming baths.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1953

### TEKAPO BRIDGE

In February, the Tekapo bridge was permanently closed. It had outlived its usefulness, and the main road was deviated across the dam.

### MR T. GUINNESSY

The county chairman and members expressed appreciation of the services of the county foreman, Mr T. Guinnessy, to the county over the previous thirty-five years. They wished him every success in his new position. He was presented with a gift of an electric razor on behalf of members of the council. Mr H. Welsh was appointed county foreman in his place.

# 10

## The Eighth Decade, 1954 to 1963

### COUNCIL AS POWER SUPPLY AUTHORITY

At its April 1954 meeting, the council decided to seek recognition as power supply authority for the Mackenzie country. It was stated that if the council's request to the Minister of Works (Hon. W. S. Goosman) was successful, they would be responsible for the reticulation of electricity between Burkes Pass and Mount Cook. There were about eighty potential customers in the area.

In June, the council decided to persevere with its application along these lines, that is, to obtain a licence to reticulate electricity to the upper Mackenzie. A letter had been received from the manager of the State Hydro-electric Department, Mr A. E. Davenport, to the effect that since the South Canterbury Electric Power Board was willing to undertake this work early the following year, the council might alter its previous decision. A letter sent from the power board to the department stated that the council was lukewarm in respect of becoming a supply authority for upper Mackenzie. The county chairman (Mr C. V. Kirke) said he had instructed the clerk to reply that the council was not lukewarm, but would be pleased to do so.

Cr J. Allan said that settlers in the back country had spent quite a lot of money and time in an effort to have the district reticulated. He could not see that the power board could reticulate the back country, when it had so much reticulation work to do on the downlands. Runholders in the back country had the utmost confidence in the ability of the council to reticulate the district. The area was not in the board's district; therefore they were not taking anything away from the board. Some of the settlers in its district had been waiting for from ten to fifteen years for electricity, and it was time they had it.

Councillors J. Scott, K. Guy and W. B. Trotter expressed misgivings at the ability of the board to cope with the upper Mackenzie reticulation — Cr Trotter said it was a physical impossibility. Cr Allan said the council had been promised the licence, and should persevere with its application. It was decided to reply to Mr Davenport, that in view of the relevant factors, the council still desired the licence.

In July, the power board approved of the Mackenzie County licence for electric lines, provided the eastern limit of the licensed area of supply was the same as that of the proposed "Mackenzie Electric-power Board". Mr F. J. Henshaw asked if the board would be compelled to take over the reticulation

if the Mackenzie County found it was unable to do so. The manager, Mr J. M. Bishop, said he knew of no legal power. Another member said that if there was any question of that happening the board should have some say in the type of lines to be erected. In agreeing to the proposal, the board said it would in no way oblige itself to take over the supply at a future date.

In August, advice was received that the council was to be the supply authority for the reticulation of the upper Mackenzie. The general manager of the State Hydro-electric Department, Mr Davenport, accepted the power board's conditions, defining the area of supply as west of Burkes Pass, and relieved the board of the responsibility of having to acquire the undertaking at some later date. Provision was made, however, for some future board to take over the area, if such action were warranted.

On 3rd March 1955, a power supply committee was appointed comprising Messrs J. Allan, J. Scott, I. Inness, W. Simpson and R. Hoskin. For some time Mr R. D. Veitch, engineer-manager of the Timaru City Council's municipal electricity department, had been acting as electrical consultant to the Mackenzie County Council, and his advice was sought throughout on all matters relating to the reticulation of the Mackenzie basin. Some time previously he had been consulted on what was involved in supplying electricity to the Hermitage, a capital cost of between £48,000 and £55,000 according to the type of supply.

There appeared to be an element of jubilation in the council on 1st June 1955, when a formal resolution approving guarantees was passed, bringing electric power nearer to forty runholders in the "basin". The capital cost of the reticulation was about £90,000, half of which would be contributed by the Government, and the rest paid by the settlers themselves over the following sixteen years.

Cr J. Allan, who had been chairman of the settlers' committee which investigated the possibility of reticulating the basin five years previously, told the council that each runholder had agreed to pay the guarantee, and was ready to sign the council's contract. He said it was the "best thing we had since we got the telephone." He paid tribute to the valuable assistance given by Mr R. D. Veitch. "In all his investigations, he has done a lot for the settlers of the back country," he said. As a result of the committee's efforts, every station between Burkes Pass and Mount Cook, except about four, would have power before the end of May 1956. Plans had already been made for work to start in the early spring. A news item said that, unlike the towns and cities of the Dominion where there were numerous consumers to every mile of line, this project, which was the first of its kind in New Zealand, provided for one consumer to many miles of line. Because of the long distances the lines had to be reticulated, the cost to station owners was expensive, but they realised the prudence of taking advantage of the finance they had available as a result of the wool boom which had followed the war years.

Apparently, in fixing the boundaries, there was an area of "no man's land" between the power board and the county areas. This was rectified by a boundaries alteration gazetted in 1956. The area which was now to be incorporated in the power board area included Mount Nimrod Station, Waratah, Mount Dalgety Station, Burkes Pass, Ashwick Flat, and Clayton Station.

## RETICULATION OF MACKENZIE BASIN

In April 1956, the council passed a formal resolution to raise a loan of £80,000 for a term of sixteen years at an interest rate not exceeding  $4\frac{3}{4}\%$  a year, secured by a rate of 2.565d in the pound on the capital value of all rateable properties within the special area.

On 5th October 1956, the council accepted a tender by D. G. Malcolm and Co. for £16,245 for the erection of lines. This particular work had been estimated at £17,000. The tenderers were required to enter into a bond to carry the amount of an advance of £4900 for the purchase of plant which was to be vested in the council.

On 6th February 1957, a news article said that the work on the reticulation of the Mackenzie basin was to commence that week, and it was expected that it would be completed in six months. The materials were on hand, and when the work of erecting 130 miles of power lines was completed, most of the outlying districts in the Rollesby Valley, Burkes Pass, Sherwood, Ashwick and Cattle Valley would be provided with electricity, either by the Mackenzie County Council, or the South Canterbury Electric Power Board. A later report said that the year 1957 should see the near completion of the reticulation of the whole of the Mackenzie County.

On 5th July 1957, on the recommendation of Mr R. D. Veitch, the council's electrical consultant, the council approved of the supply of electricity to the Tekapo Military Camp. The terms were a cash payment of £2915 by the Southern Military District, to assist with the finance of lines, an annual charge of £87/10/- for line maintenance, and power at £3/15/- per kilowatt quarter (kilowatt demand per quarter).

On 1st October 1957, the first electric power was switched on at a ceremony in the power house of the Lake Tekapo hydro station. A report said that within the next few months the council's scheme, which would cost £80,000, and would eventually embrace thirty-six homesteads scattered over the 2000 square miles of the basin between Burkes Pass and Ohau Range, would be completed. Portable plants which had provided electric power over the years became stand-by units in case of emergency; the kerosene lamp was a thing of the past.

There was a very large gathering of official guests representing a wide variety of interests, mainly local body and electrical. Mr C. V. Kirke, the county chairman, in an opening address referred to Mr J. Allan of Benrose Station, Lake Pukaki, as the father of the scheme. He said that in a year's time the military camp would be reticulated, and an estimate had been asked for reticulating the new Hermitage hotel at Mount Cook.

## POWER FOR THE HERMITAGE

That month, October 1957, a provisional estimate of £59,000 was given as the cost of extending the reticulation system to serve the Hermitage. The cost involved £3000 for a sub-station at Lake Tekapo, £5400 line alterations and new transformers between Tekapo and Top House, £47,000 new line from Pukaki to the Hermitage, £2000 sub-station at the Hermitage, £1600 sundries and switching gear. The cost could be financed in two ways. First, by the consumer paying the capital cost, and second by the council finding the cost.

The advantage of the former would be that the annual cost to the consumer would be lighter, as the council would not have to make interest and sinking fund provisions, and no minimum guarantee of revenue over some years would be required.

In July 1958, Mr Veitch reported that the Tourist Hotel Corporation was not interested in the council's proposition. He then inspected the Tasman River bed, with the thought that a line might be built across it, and came to the opinion that it could be satisfactorily crossed between Claycliff Stream and the Twins Stream. This would permit a 30,000-volt line being built between Tekapo and the Hermitage via Guide Hill, a shorter route not involving alterations to the existing reticulation. The capital cost he estimated at £50,900, and an annual charge at  $11\frac{1}{2}\%$  would be £5680. Power would be £5/5/- per kilowatt quarter, varying with the cost to the county. It was decided to pass this information on to the Tourist Hotel Corporation.

On 5th September 1958, the council was informed that the Tourist Hotel Corporation was definitely interested, and it asked the council to proceed with test piles across the Tasman River to determine if the scheme was feasible. On 1st May 1959, the chairman reported that as no objections had been received to raising a loan of £75,000 for the Hermitage reticulation, the council could go ahead and do so. The term would be for twenty years, interest not to exceed 5% per annum.

On 9th October 1959, sanction for the loan came to hand. The special order passed by the council said that the loan was for the purpose of extending the electrical reticulation in the Mackenzie basin to serve the Hermitage, Mount Cook, and other consumers, and to provide a house for an employee, and any other purposes they were legally allowed to do.

A news item dated 7th September 1960 stated that the Hermitage would be using national electricity about Christmas, or soon after, as a result of negotiations that had been completed between the New Zealand Tourist Hotel Corporation and the Mackenzie County Council supply authority. Since the hotel was rebuilt in 1958, it had been supplied with electric power from a portable diesel plant.

On 1st July 1961, a function to mark the completion of the project and the switching on of the power was attended by about eighty representatives of Government departments, electrical interests, and South Canterbury local bodies. Mrs T. L. Hayman, the wife of the Minister of Agriculture, flicked a switch to connect the hotel to the national grid. Others attending included the county chairman, Mr W. B. Trotter, and Mrs Trotter, the Minister of Agriculture, Mr T. L. Hayman, Cr J. Allan and Mrs Allan, the hotel manager, Mr L. S. Dennis, the chairman of the Electrical Supply Authorities Association, Mr W. S. N. Rennie, Major N. A. Rattray, representing the Counties Association, Mr J. S. Satterthwaite, representing the Rural Electrical Reticulation Council, Mr D. L. Grant, the department's district engineer, Mr T. M. Murray of the Federated Farmers, Mr R. D. Veitch, and other council representatives.

Mr Grant said the Mackenzie basin project had set a number of New Zealand records — here we had four miles to the consumer, others had a small number of customers to the mile. It held a record for capital cost per consumer, and for the number of units per consumer. "I think I can go a little further than that," he said, "for here we have something that has taken

the highest courage and initiative." Both Mr Trotter and Mr Dennis spoke feelingly in a tribute to Cr J. Allan, a councillor and a runholder, who once again was referred to as "the father of the scheme". In 1964 Cr Allan was awarded the M.B.E.

### THE QUEEN'S VISIT, 1954

Although Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh did not actually come to the Mackenzie country during their visit to South Canterbury on 25th January 1954, the county was nevertheless involved in the reception in Ashbury Park, Timaru. On the official dais were Mr and Mrs C. V. Kirke among other South Canterbury dignitaries.

The Mackenzie County's welcome was in the nature of a display with a huge hoarding announcing, "Loyal Greetings. Mackenzie County", in the centre of which was a large picture of Mount Cook. It was stationed at the foot of the showgrounds hill, near Grants Road, and could be seen from a considerable distance.

The official gift to the Queen was a picture of Mount Cook, 18in by 14in, and described as "Eight hundred hours of fine exacting work, 134,500 stitches in petit point, and a careful studying of a Duncan Darroch painting, resulted in a beautiful picture being produced by Mrs R. J. Comrie for the people of South Canterbury to present to Her Majesty." In the sky alone, more than a dozen shades were blended to achieve the cloud effect of the painting. The illusion of white snow called for the use of pink, blue, yellow, and green shading, and the combined effect, strangely enough, was that of sunlight on snow.

Silk as well as wools had been used in the picture, and the finished work of art was one which could proudly take its place besides the gifts presented by other centres in the Dominion. The picture was mounted in a continental frame of pale silvery gold without glass. On a silver plate at the foot were the words: "Mt. Cook, 12,349ft.; South Canterbury, New Zealand".

On Monday, 25th January 1954, a special train ran from Fairlie to Timaru, departing from Fairlie at 7.30 a.m., arriving at Ashbury Park at 9 a.m., and leaving Timaru again at 4.30 p.m., stopping at Caroline Bay to pick up passengers. Mr Kirke, in an advertisement, thanked all the ladies who willingly played their part in making decorations and the gentlemen who enthusiastically carried out the difficult task of erecting them.

### FIRE-FIGHTING FACILITIES AT BURKES PASS

In August 1954, in a report on fire-fighting water at Burkes Pass, the consulting engineer told a meeting that the cost of a scheme he proposed would be about £2295. The static pressure of the water supply of the township was calculated to be about 55lb to the square inch, but the existing 2in pipe was able to deliver only 28 gallons per minute. Fire fighting required 140 gallons per minute, and this necessitated a 4in main.

The cost appeared to be high to be borne by a few ratepayers, but he referred to a previous report he had made to the council where he recommended several 1½in stand pipes in the township, and 300 feet of 1½in hose to be operated by a local committee. This would be very effective in dealing with a fire in its early stages, he said.

A reservoir had been suggested from which a 4in main could be connected, he said. Such a reservoir would have to be 100ft high to provide a pressure of about 43lb to the square inch. He did not know of a suitable site close enough to the township to make the suggestion feasible.

Cr Scott said the proposed cost would be too much for the few settlers at Burkes Pass, and it would be useless calling a meeting to discuss the proposal. It was agreed that the engineer make a closer investigation of the suggested reservoir.

At a subsequent meeting it was said that to give a supply of 40lb pressure would cost £1600, requiring a concrete reservoir 100 feet above the level of the township. Mr Milward said the alternative scheme of 1½in pipes and hose from the present pipeline would give a greater measure of water than most imagined. It would cost £150.

#### PAYING FOR FAIRLIE WATER SUPPLY

A minor poser was placed before council on 3rd June 1955, when the county clerk revealed that work on the augmented water supply for Fairlie had incurred an additional cost of £1025 because of additional increase in costs and the difficulty in obtaining materials. The work during the year had been estimated at £3000, and he recommended that the balance be transferred from the general account to the augmentation account to offset the debt.

Mr Somers said this would be recovered from the general rates collected in the Fairlie area, and need not be a burden on the whole county. If a county town was formed, it could be advanced and repaid over a period of five years from the town's special account. The only other solution would be to raise a loan of £1000, but he felt that as the maintenance account was in such an unsound financial position it would be preferable to use any possible increase in revenue towards the reduction of the debt in the augmentation account.

Cr W. B. Trotter moved that the estimates be approved, this involving the transfer of £1000 to the augmentation account from the general fund. "As from 31st March, Fairlie township will probably be on its own, and if we start them off from scratch, it would mean we were pocketing £2000 of their money," he said. "We should not ask them to raise a loan on their money." Mr Trotter went on to say that if the debt was offset by a contribution of £1000 from the profit of the county fund, which rightly belonged to them, the county would be doing right by them.

Cr K. Guy maintained that to follow Cr Trotter's suggestion was trying to find an easy way out. If they did everything according to Hoyle, they should raise a loan of £1000 and rate accordingly. He suggested that the debt be left where it was, and the new town committee be given the opportunity of having an interest-free loan to square the debt when the township was formed.

Cr Trotter's motion that the estimates be approved was lost, only he and the seconder, Cr W. A. Mackintosh, voting in favour. The council then decided, only Cr Trotter dissenting, that the debt be held in the estimates until the county township had been formed, the committee to be offered the opportunity of raising a loan in the ordinary way, or borrowing £1000 from the county fund, and repaying it over five years from the township's general fund.



R. L. BANKS,  
CLERK-ENGINEER, 1889-1929



J. R. FOUGERE,  
CONSULTING ENGINEER  
1974- 1983



B. W. PERRIN,  
COUNTY CLERK, 1959-1963



FAIRLIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL, 1980-1983

Back Row: Cr. R. Crampton, J. E. Hey (Secretary), Crs. S. R. Harris, M. J. Wood, P. F. Carter.  
Front Row: Crs. E. Clarke, R. E. Anniss (Chairman), J. Shaw.



MACKENZIE COUNTY COUNCIL, 1983  
Works Staff, Store and Garage

## FAIRLIE COUNTY TOWN ESTIMATES

As it was in March 1956 that the election results of the first Fairlie county town committee were confirmed by the Mackenzie County Council, the first annual estimates are of special interest.

	RECEIPTS	£
Rates on capital value	.....	3021
Road board subsidies	.....	995
Hotel licences	.....	50
Eating house licences	.....	1
Hairdressers' licences	.....	2
Building permits	.....	30
		<hr/>
	EXPENDITURE	4099
Administration (10%)	.....	400
Share library	.....	200
Hospital and harbour board levies	.....	533
Water supply augmentation	.....	200
Share bridges loan	.....	120
Grading	.....	130
Metalling	.....	150
Scavenge	.....	100
Road maintenance	.....	50
Entrance crossings	.....	40
Lawns	.....	90
Domain	.....	100
Storm damage	.....	45
Sealing	.....	2000
Street lighting	.....	200
		<hr/>
		4358

In reply to Cr K. Guy, Mr Somers said that although the committee had budgeted for a deficit, its sealing programme had been set at £2000, all of which might not be spent. Cr Guy said he did not think the committee should budget for a deficit, and he recommended that the sealing expenditure be reduced by £500, and that the committee allow for contingencies of about £200. The committee agreed to this suggestion.

Of interest is the item of £200 water supply augmentation. It would appear that the committee had taken advantage of the council's offer to lend them £1000 for five years to clear the debit in the account. The committee also inherited a portion of the annual hospital and harbour boards levies, a matter of perennial concern to the council.

## FAIRLIE TOWNSHIP GOES UNIMPROVED

It was not long after obtaining its rating independence from the county that the question arose as to whether the township of Fairlie should be rated on the unimproved value of property instead of capital value as hitherto. In September 1956, a petition was circulated to change the rating system, to be signed at T. K. Clark's, J. A. Fraser's or H. Carlton's before 10th October.

The required number of names was collected, and the poll fixed for 17th November. The county town committee said they were anxious that all eligible ratepayers should cast their votes, so that the decision would cover a representative opinion on whether the change was desired. This was stated to be the first poll of its kind held in New Zealand since the Act was altered in 1952 following representations from the Mackenzie County Council, through the Counties Association conference. There was also an advertisement over the signature of Mr Somers as returning officer, that under the regulations application could be made to him for a postal vote.

A week before the poll, the chairman of the council said that the town council had no wish to influence residents in their selection of a rating system in their area. It seemed that some Fairlie people had adopted the idea that the committee favoured the change, but it was completely unbiased in the matter, and was merely giving the people the opportunity to change if they so desired. Mr W. A. Mackintosh, the chairman of the committee, said a resolution had been passed at a recent meeting that the committee was "absolutely impartial" and the decision was "over to the people".

The proposal to change to unimproved value rating was carried by 211 votes to 89, with 4 votes informal. A news article said that Fairlie and Kaikoura, which also voted for unimproved value at the recent elections, were the first county towns in New Zealand to make the change.

#### A DEMOCRATIC NON-ELECTION

*No man is good enough to govern another man without the other's consent.*

— Abraham Lincoln

Most people will be familiar with Abraham Lincoln's famous definition of democracy as government of the people, by the people, for the people, but few of the cynical response, government of the people with nothing, by the people with something, for the people with everything. We are accustomed to think of democracy as a party system of government where you have no chance of being elected unless you have sold your soul to a political platform, and even then you must be accepted by the party as a whole, or at least by some committee. There is little hope of being elected to Parliament unless you are committed in this way.

We look with disdain at a one-party system of government and brand it a dictatorship. In this case one has no hope of a political career unless one conforms to the standard set down by authority. On the other hand, someone has commented on the two-party system, "Whoever in his right mind would elect a board of directors to run a business, and another board at the same time to make sure it doesn't."

This brings us to the local body system of government which we have in South Canterbury, which, for want of a better name, may be called the no-party system. Anyone can offer his services, and if he is at all presentable and persuasive has as much chance as anyone else of being elected. Councillors may have party affiliations, but these do not obtrude to any extent in council; neither are they obliged to follow a party line.

At the municipal elections in 1956, the Mackenzie County presented a most unusual state of affairs. Two members were required for each of four ridings,

and one member each for the catchment board, the power board, two for the harbour board, and one for the hospital board. The exact number of candidates were nominated in each case, and there was no election. There was only one alteration in the personnel of the council.

One may philosophise about democracy in this setting from many angles. The result shows that the people have absolute confidence in the outgoing council, and were prepared for them to carry on. This is their democratic right. Or, if the people do not offer their services, they deserve what they are getting. Or, there is apathy and the people cannot be bothered — if they do not exercise their democratic rights, they will lose them. If, instead of a no-party council, there were political parties such as they have in Christchurch and elsewhere, an election would have been guaranteed.

One cannot help feeling that the no-party system will continue in South Canterbury. There is no evidence to show that progress has been hindered in the Mackenzie County because of it.

#### RENAME A STREET

What appeared in March 1955 as a somewhat neat pun cracked by Cr K. Guy became a serious reality when the Fairlie County town committee considered the same matter some fifteen months later. The officers of St Stephen's Church had asked that Manse Street be renamed, as the word "manse" was considered to be confusing as there was no church manse in the street. They suggested that the street be renamed "Church Street".

Cr K. Guy: What about Kirke Street?

The chairman, Mr C. V. Kirke: I do not think so.

On the suggestion of the chairman, it was decided to make a decision as to a new name for the street at the following meeting. At the next meeting it was decided to retain the name "Manse Street". Mr Kirke said that "Church Street" and "Kidd Street" had been suggested, and others had objected to any change at all. Cr Guy expressed the opinion that the name should be retained, and Mr Kirke said it might be prudent to leave the name in abeyance until a county township was formed, in which case the members of the committee could decide if a change of name was warranted.

In June 1956, the township committee considered street names in general, and decided to rename Manse Street as Kirke Street, in recognition of the long and valued service given to the district by the council's chairman. Mr Kirke said that while he would be honoured to have a street named after him, he was not "too keen" about it.

#### NEW FIRE STATION OPENED

The fire station, which was opened in 1914, and of which the residents of Fairlie were justly proud, was destroyed by fire in April 1953. The new station was opened by the county chairman, Mr C. V. Kirke, on 2nd February 1957, at 3 p.m. The new building was constructed of concrete blocks and concrete floors, and was attractively painted throughout. It provided an engine room 45ft long and 20ft wide, a spacious store, and a comfortable meeting room. The town area was linked to the station by an automatic fire alarm system.

The chief fire officer, Mr H. T. Foden, thanked the Mackenzie County Council for their co-operation, and to the many who had given of their weekends and their holidays to assist the building of the station. He mentioned

Mr H. Welsh, the only surviving member of the fire brigade of fifty years ago, who was present. When the old building was destroyed by fire the brigade members offered to provide the labour for the new building, and the materials were provided from council funds. There had been a willing band of workers, and the building was a credit to their efforts.

Mr Kirke said the building was valued at £4000, but, due to the labour provided voluntarily, the cost to the ratepayers was only £1000, and the building would be opened free of debt. Mr Kirke said a new engine was on order, and would be available in six to eight months. It would cost about £3400.

Mr W. B. Trotter, chairman of the Fairlie brigade committee, presided at the gathering, and eulogistic addresses were given by Mr C. C. Knight, president of the United Fire Brigades Association, and Mr R. A. Davidson, chief officer of the Timaru Fire Brigade, and regional fire officer for South Canterbury. After declaring the fire station open, Mr Kirke handed the key to Mr Foden, and a quick turn-out of the brigade was staged.

Since the Government has established the fire service on a national basis, a new fire station is being built on another site.

#### MR HUBERT WELSH

Mr Hubert Welsh, known as Bert, referred to above, was no relation to Mr H. Welsh who accepted the position of poundkeeper to the Mount Cook Road Board in 1877. His son, Henry R. Welsh, was employed by the council from 1935, becoming foreman in 1953, and completing thirty-seven years service when he retired.

#### EXTENSION OF OPUHA RIDING

Considerable discussion and negotiation took place with a view to incorporating the properties of Messrs R. E. H. Beattie and A. N. Buick on the Lochaber road into the Mackenzie County. The ready willingness of the Geraldine County Council to co-operate assisted the transfer.

On 2nd August 1957, the chairman, Mr C. V. Kirke, said that the Minister of Works had raised the question of the county taking over these properties, and suggested that certain conditions be considered by the council. One was that the Government make a free grant to cover the cost of making the road as safe as possible against damage by further floods, and that the council be given five years in which to carry out the work. There were also stipulations regarding future grants not being prejudiced to the detriment of the rest of the county, and certain payments by the Geraldine County relating to rates collected over the previous eleven years.

Letters from Messrs Beattie and Buick were received by the council, placing certain facts before them to enable a decision to be reached. Among these was the fact that the present boundary of the county on the Lochaber road was Phantom Bridge, and that the Blue Mountain cutting which would become a Mackenzie County responsibility often gave trouble, but could be made secure with a reasonable amount of work and expense. Mr Beattie pointed out that the access to his Dry Creek homestead was already in the Mackenzie County, and therefore the top cutting known as Dry Creek Bluff was already part of the county's road system and responsibility. In March 1958, the facts were placed before the Local Government Commission for consideration.

The next move seems to have been a deputation from the Geraldine County Council, as a consequence of which it was resolved "That the Mackenzie County Council agree to the transfer of the Lochaber and Blue Mountain properties from the Geraldine county to the Mackenzie county, on the condition that the Geraldine county pay £1550 to the Mackenzie County Council, and that a reasonable free grant is made available by the Government to put the road in order, and ensure that there is adequate protection from future floods." The following month it was decided to accept the Geraldine County Council's offer without the stipulation of a free Government grant.

#### HENRY THOMAS FODEN RETIRES

Saturday, 17th May 1958, was a red letter day for the Fairlie Fire Brigade when Mr H. T. Foden's last official act as chief fire officer was to accept a new modern fire engine from the county council on behalf of the brigade. Purchased at a cost of £3500 of which £2500 was loan money, the engine was described as fully equipped to cover rural as well as urban areas. The county chairman, Mr C. V. Kirke, in handing over the machine, said that the fire committee had decided to purchase the engine to assist the ever-vigilant brigade, the members of which gave of their time voluntarily to protect the property of the residents of the Mackenzie County.

Mr Foden's last official act was followed by a farewell on his retirement after completing forty-seven years with the brigade, the last thirteen years as chief fire officer. He was presented with a writing set and pen by the residents of the district.

Mr Foden joined the brigade in 1911, just three years after its formation. At the time there were eleven other members, with Mr W. Close as chief fire officer, and Lieutenant H. Welsh as deputy chief. The main items of equipment were two bucket pumps, a far cry from the modern engine which had just been presented to the brigade. Mr Foden said his men had always supported the view that payment should not be made for voluntary service. "None of us has been in it for money, or personal gain," he said.

Mr Foden was born in Timaru, and had lived in Fairlie for sixty-three years. He had been a member of the management committee of the St John Ambulance Association, and for a number of years had served St Stephn's Anglican Church as vestryman, organist and vicar's warden. He represented the Mackenzie County on the South Canterbury Hospital Board for the previous eight years, and then right through till 1963, thirteen years in all.

#### CHARLES VERE KIRKE

Mr C. V. Kirke was a Mackenzie County councillor from 1938 to 1959, twenty-one years in all, and chairman from 1942 to 1959, a term of seventeen years. Mr Kirke's father was the first to take up a sheep run at Lake Te Anau in Otago in 1860, and because of that Mr Kirke had a deep appreciation of what the early settlers in the Mackenzie suffered to lay the foundations of the county. Having farmed in Fairlie since 1925, he saw improved farm methods as a means of greatly increasing production in a way not even dreamed of thirty years earlier.

Mr Kirke was educated at Christ's College, and had been a member of the Timaru Choral Society, and found relaxation (for the last fifty years) in playing his violin which he had bought in London. In 1926 he built Timaru's

first block of flats, which he named Markham after his ancestral home in Nottinghamshire, England. He was an infantry soldier in the First World War, and served three years in the trenches in France.

Mr Kirke had been a representative of South Island counties on the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council since 1946, a member of the Canterbury Patriotic Provincial Council, a former chairman of the Rural Fire Service committee, and a member of the Fairlie Patriotic Committee. He was also patron of the Mackenzie Agricultural and Pastoral Association, and also the Marching Association.

Commenting on the announcement of his retirement, the *Timaru Herald* said that Mr Kirke had given generously of his time and services. He had had the Mackenzie country first and foremost in his mind, and had acted tactfully and fearlessly in its interests. He was one of the many who had contributed by unselfish example a great deal to this district. "If the Mackenzie Council had an honours board, the name Kirke would figure prominently on it." He is commemorated in Fairlie in a street named after him during his lifetime. He was in his seventies at the time of his retirement from public life.

#### SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

On 1st August 1958, the council decided to hold the official celebrations of its seventy-fifth anniversary, which was 1st October 1958, at the same time as the centenary of South Canterbury — on 21st, 22nd and 23rd April of the following year. Official functions planned were: 21st April, banquet; 22nd April, sports; and 23rd April, grand ball. The announcement said that April was fixed as the month suitable to all residents in the district, and that it was hoped that local functions would be arranged also.

Advertisements nearer the time referred to the centennial celebrations. On Wednesday, 22nd, there was a children's sports day in the showgrounds, and pictures for children between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. For the Thursday was advertised the grand centennial ball, with good music, oysters and savoury supper. The banquet, which was held on the 24th, was to celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the county.

There were 150 guests, and associated with the chairman and Mrs Kirke were T. L. Hayman, M.P., and Mrs Hayman; the District Commissioner of Works, Mr A. E. Clarke; the Geraldine County chairman, Mr A. J. Davey, and Mrs Davey; the mayor and mayoress of Timaru, Mr and Mrs R. E. White; the Waimate County chairman, Major N. A. Rattray, and Mrs Rattray; the Levels County chairman, Mr D. C. Doake, and Mrs Doake; and Cr W. B. Trotter as toastmaster, and Mrs Trotter.

There was a lengthy toast list covering local bodies, boards, Government departments, past members, staff, and the press. Cr J. P. O'Neill said that some great men had set the foundations of the council, and referred to previous chairmen including Messrs G. Murray, W. Scott, F. R. Gillingham and E. Macdonald, and councillors such as Messrs F. J. Carter, P. E. Neilson, J. L. McKerchar, K. Guy, P. J. Keenan and A. B. Mackenzie. Special tributes were paid to Mr R. L. Banks who had been engineer-clerk for nearly forty years.

In July 1959 it was agreed that the council plant a sugar maple, and that the chairman get in touch with Dr E. G. Stubbs who had offered to supply

the same. The clerk was directed to make enquiries as to the purchase of a brass plaque to mark the tree. Later it was agreed that the tree be planted approximately 12ft from the centre of the railway line, and halfway between the war memorial and the fire brigade concrete ramp.

The tree was planted on 11th September. On the same day a tree-planting ceremony with members of the district women's institutes was held on the Mount Cook Road. The clerk (Mr Perrin) said that a site along the old railway bank had been chosen by representatives of the council and the town committee, and it was proposed to plant twelve trees in addition to the one marking the seventy-fifth anniversary. The trees had been given to the county by the North Otago Tree Planting Association.

The plaque read: "This tree was planted to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Mackenzie County Council. C. V. Kirke, chairman, September 1959."

#### A SUCCESSION OF COUNTY CLERKS

During the decade 1954 to 1963, the Mackenzie County Council had three county clerks. When Messrs Bridges and Milward became consulting engineers in July 1950, Mr James Somers was appointed the first county clerk as his sole responsibility. In March 1956, Mr Andrew Bruce Hawke was appointed assistant county clerk. There seems to have been a slight overlap here, as Miss Mary Edwards, after thirteen years service with the council, resigned as at 31st August 1956, to get married. It was stated that she had been assistant county clerk for the past six years.

On 6th June 1958, Mr Brian John Dwyer was appointed assistant county clerk in succession to Mr Hawke. Mr Somers resigned as at 26th January 1959, and from that date Mr Brian William Perrin, who had been with the Selwyn County, took over as county clerk on 25th May. Mr Dwyer was county clerk in an acting capacity. When Mr Perrin resigned in 1963 to accept a position with the Malvern County Council at Darfield, Mr Dwyer became county clerk, a position which he still holds (1983).

#### HYDATIDS CONTROL OFFICER

On 3rd July 1959, the Mackenzie County Council decided to inform the South Canterbury Hydatids Committee of its intention to employ its own eradication officer. The decision, which was unanimous, was reached after a five-man deputation representing local hydatids committees had urged the council to employ such an officer. The basic reason for taking this step was that the council was against the appointment of only two officers to cover the four counties, and they wanted an officer whose sole duty was to the Mackenzie County.

At the September meeting, the county clerk, Mr B. W. Perrin, said the annual expenditure was estimated at £1960, which included £900 salary and £600 travelling expenses. He said that receipts would be slightly in excess of expenditure. Dog registrations were estimated at £398 (1470 working dogs at 5/-, and 30 others at £1), and the hydatids prevention fee at 15/- a dog to produce £1125. There were 1570 dogs registered, but the estimates were calculated on only 1500, allowing a small margin for the possible disposal of dogs arising out of the increased fees. The council fixed the charge at £1 for working dogs, and £1/15/- for others.

Mr G. H. Clarkson was appointed county hydatids control officer, to take up his duties after completing a training course at the hydatids research station at Taieri, near Dunedin. There were twenty-two applications for the position.

Mr Clarkson carried through a campaign of addressing meetings on dosing and other requirements. A full attendance of dog owners was requested at five separate meetings held, first, the Allandale-Skipton area committee in Allandale Hall, the Albury-Cave Ma Waro committee area in the Albury Hall, the Cricklewood-Fairlie-Kimbell area in the Aorangi Hall at Fairlie, the Sherwood Down-Ashwick committee area in Sherwood Hall, and finally a meeting of the Upper Mackenzie area committee, to be arranged at a later date.

In the meantime, Mr K. Anderson, dog registrar, county road ranger and noxious weed inspector, was asked to retire as at 31st December. On 9th October, Mr Anderson joined the councillors for afternoon tea, when the chairman explained that a hydatids officer had been employed to combine noxious weed inspecting and road rangering, and Mr Anderson was being asked to retire with a request that he stay on till the end of the year. He thanked Mr Anderson for his faithful service over a long period, and asked him to assist Mr Clarkson until his retirement.

Mr Anderson thanked Mr Kirke, and said he fully realised the council must move with the times, and that his retirement was imminent. He said he was happy to sever his connection with the council, thanked them for retaining him till the end of the year, and expressed his thanks to the chairman, councillors and office staff for their co-operation and help in the past.

#### IMPROVING FAIRLIE WATER SUPPLY

On 5th February 1960, concern was expressed at the poor condition of the Fairlie water supply. It was agreed that the matter be referred to the town committee. Cr W. J. Lundie said that the residents had complained that the water was putrid and unfit to drink. He also mentioned that Stanton Creek ran into the supply from Three Springs at Kimbell.

The county foreman (Mr H. Welsh) said that the race from Three Springs was open to stock. The water from Stanton Creek came from a swamp and spilled into the town supply. The only way to overcome the problem was to divert the race well away from Stanton Creek. Even then, the race was still open to stock.

The county clerk (Mr B. W. Perrin) said that the medical officer of health's tests in December had shown a high reading of bacteria content. The officer had stated that a better system of chlorination was being investigated. Mr Welsh said chlorination did not alter the present brackish taste or colour.

The following month the council decided to apply for permission to raise a loan for the installation of an 8in pipeline from the headworks at Three Springs to the reservoir. The proposed pipeline would supplement the present 3in main, and replace the open race augmentation system now known to be responsible for the pollution of the supply — a matter which had been discussed at a recent meeting of the county town committee. The estimated cost of the project would be about £15,000, but an application would be made for a Government subsidy.

In a comprehensive report, the consulting engineer, Mr G. R. Milward, said that a 6in pipe costing about £10,800 would be adequate for the needs of

Fairlie for the next thirty to forty years, but the chairman, Mr W. B. Trotter, said he was of the opinion that a 6in line would be inadequate within twenty years. He said the council must provide a supply sufficient to meet any emergency, including fires. The council, on the motion of Crs R. M. Rapley and W. J. Lundie, decided to install an 8in pipe and make application for the necessary loan moneys.

The question of urgency was raised again in August by Cr Lundie, who said the water was absolutely putrid, and the Fairlie people should not be asked to put up with it longer than necessary. Mr Trotter replied, "If you think we should not wait any longer, and that the Fairlie people are prepared to pay the whole cost themselves, at say £14,000, we can do it that way." Cr Lundie agreed that country people should be given an opportunity to join the scheme, and supported a motion by Cr Rapley that a meeting of Cricklewood ratepayers be convened as soon as possible for discussion on the proposed extension to the district.

Urgency was accorded the scheme in September when Mr Milward was instructed to prepare detailed plans, including provision for the extension of the scheme to Cricklewood, and the area known as the Reserve. Ratepayers of the two districts would be invited to join the supply as soon as their share of the cost was known. Following a volume of correspondence in the *Timaru Herald*, the chairman, Mr Trotter, published a short history of the Fairlie water supply. In this he incorporated a justification of an 8in pipeline as against a 6in pipeline alternative proposal.

At the October meeting of the council there was a clash of opinion on the matter. The consulting engineer's report was criticised by Mr Trotter as doing little more than supporting a 6in pipe as originally proposed by Mr Milward, whereas the council had already decided on an 8in pipe. The chairman also accused Mr Milward of under-estimating Fairlie's population at 1000. After a heated debate, the engineer said he was prepared to include in his report a clause to the effect that the council desired an 8in pipe because it was afraid of water shortage. The proposals were adopted and a sub-committee appointed to write a letter to the Loans Board. The council agreed to raise a loan of £15,500 for the work.

In February 1961, trouble brewed again, when the Local Authorities Loan Board gave permission to raise a loan of £12,000 instead of the £15,500 asked for, because technical advice to the board indicated that a 6in pipeline would be adequate for the proposed scheme. The council decided to ask the Loans Board to reconsider the application. In support, Mr Trotter said the Fairlie Town Committee and the volunteer fire brigade both considered an 8in pipe should be installed. The brigade was concerned that a 6in pipe would be inadequate for fire-fighting purposes.

On 29th May, Mr Trotter addressed the town committee on developments regarding the water supply, and gave full reasons for his adhering to his opinion that an 8in pipeline was necessary. However, the following evening, a meeting of sixty ratepayers gave its full support to a 6in line. It requested the council to notify the Loans Board that the authority to raise a loan on the basis of a 6in pipeline be accepted, and that, subject to financial arrangements, the consulting engineer be instructed to proceed with the plans and work under his supervision forthwith.

On 2nd June 1961, after an acrimonious debate, it was decided by six votes to two, the proposition opposed by Mr Trotter and Cr Rapley, to go along with the town committee's recommendation to proceed as soon as possible with the 6in pipeline scheme at an estimated cost of £12,000. Mr Milward thereupon said that this had now gone on for fifteen months, and could not go on any longer, and informed the council of his intention to resign. He was requested by six votes to two to reconsider the matter, and he promised to discuss it with his firm. He subsequently withdrew his resignation.

On 4th August, it was Mr Trotter's turn to resign as chairman, but not as a member. He explained that, due to differences that existed during the council's deliberations over the Fairlie water supply, he considered that his position had become untenable, and therefore he must resign as chairman. All the other councillors urged Mr Trotter to reconsider his decision, "at least until the annual meeting in December", but he declined to do so. Mr Kenneth Guy was elected to fill the vacancy. He took the chair immediately, and stated that because of circumstances it was with reluctance that he accepted the position. Mr Trotter remained on the council until the 1962 elections, and did not stand again, thus completing a distinguished career of just over twenty years duration, representing the Fairlie Riding from 1942 when he was appointed to the council under wartime regulations to succeed the late William Scott.

On 2nd March 1962, a tender by J. and S. Construction Co. Ltd for £4909/15/6 was accepted for the construction work relating to the scheme.

#### DOWNLANDS WATER SUPPLY

In August 1960, the county council decided somewhat reluctantly to join with the other South Canterbury county councils, Levels, Waimate and Geraldine, in accepting the Government's offer to transfer the Downlands Water Supply Scheme to local control.

Cr Kenneth Guy who, together with the county chairman, Mr W. B. Trotter, attended a meeting of county representatives to discuss the proposal, said he was not particularly happy about the Government's offer, but felt the council should join the other local bodies.

"The gift of the scheme is not as generous as it might appear at first, for we will be taking over a number of problems," Cr Guy said. "However, it is felt that these problems can be overcome only by a change in administration. One of the points that must be borne in mind is that the present pipe line has already had twenty years use. However, we cannot stand out."

The council agreed to adopt the scheme, and appointed Cr Guy to the combined committee.

#### CENTRALISING COUNCIL SERVICES

In October 1960 the council adopted a policy in principle to centralise its works and plant in Allandale Road. The question of centralising the works and engineering services was raised by the county clerk, Mr B. W. Perrin, who emphasised the difficulties and high cost of operating the two yards. The main yard behind the council offices could not be enlarged, and expansion was necessary in the Allandale yard.

The consulting engineer, Mr G. R. Milward, said he assumed the council would wish to build in permanent materials, as there would be little saving in cost if an attempt were made to pull down the existing wooden buildings and re-erect them on the new site. The building and facilities he recommended provided for the existing plant and materials with an increase of, say, 25%. He could not see the requirements becoming greater than this in the next twenty years. It would be desirable to have a county employee resident near the yard as caretaker.

Mr Milward's estimate of the cost was: caretaker's residence £3000, truck garage for ten vehicles £3600, workshop with parts store and office £2700, extra grader garage £400, staff room etc. £520, extension to main store £600, and other items £780. He said that high-pressure water supply should be installed as a fire protection, and this was estimated to cost about £1200.

In moving that the council determine its future policy, Cr Guy said it would be difficult to fix a date for transfer, but a decision in principle should be made to facilitate future plans. "It will be a costly job, and may have to be done gradually," said Cr Guy. "I am sure future councils will thank us for making the change." The resolution was seconded by Cr W. J. Lundie, and carried unanimously.

#### A STEEP RISE IN FAIRLIE RATES

When rates rise steeply one can expect a savage protest from at least some people. We must consider the old age pensioner. Business cannot carry on with such an ever-increasing burden. The householder is being penalised. This is all very well from the point of view of the ratepayer, but how do councillors face up to increasing costs? What is the happy mean between extravagance and necessity? There can be false economy — if current work is neglected, sooner or later the ratepayer must pay heavily for it.

This must have been the dilemma which faced the Fairlie County Town Committee when it recommended its estimates to the council in 1963. By a four to three majority, the committee recommended a 35% increase, or 16 13/32 pence in the pound, from 3 shillings 10 22/32 pence to 5 shillings 3 3/32 pence in the pound.

One of the reasons for the increase was that the previous year started with a credit balance of £1496, whereas for the current year there was a debit of £219. The works programme outlined in the estimates had already been approved, but to carry it out a substantial increase in rates would be necessary. The chairman, Mr W. A. Barwood, said that the committee had to face up to the problem of either increasing the rates or reducing the works programme. Mr P. Gallen said that while he agreed that the proposed programme was not an ambitious one, and that the works involved were an essential improvement to the town, he could not agree to the substantial increase in rates that was proposed. He agreed that some increase was necessary. "We will have to cut back the proposed programme somehow," he said.

Mrs B. L. Crichton said the ratepayers would not stand for the proposed increase. Mr Rapsey seconded Mr Barwood's motion to recommend the increase. Mr Gallen moved an amendment that the estimated cost of the special works programme be reduced by £1760 (including subsidy). This was seconded by Mrs Crichton and defeated.

When the recommended estimates came before the council in June, a proposal by Crs C. E. Jones and P. F. Carter that the Fairlie county town general rate be reduced by  $7\frac{1}{4}$ d in the £ from  $3/7\frac{1}{4}$  to 3/- in the £ was carried. The decision was made after a petition from 74 ratepayers protesting at the rates proposed by the committee had been received. The chairman, Mr K. Guy, said there were a good many ratepayers in the county town who were wage earners, and this was something the council had to consider. There was no time to send the estimates back for revision.

At a subsequent meeting, Mr Guy said that the county's rating could be considered to be near the economic maximum, and for that reason they must press for larger grants from the National Roads Board to enable motorists within the county to be provided with the improved surfaces to which they were entitled.

### PLANNING AHEAD: ROADS AND BRIDGES

The National Roads Board had asked for a five-year programme of road improvement work. On 3rd December 1954, the county clerk, Mr J. Somers, submitted a programme which he considered was reasonably within the scope of the county's finances. He presented the following plans of sealing main highways, with the council's share of the cost in parentheses:

First year: Geraldine-Fairlie, three miles, £9000 (£2250); Cave-Pareora, two miles, £4000 (£300).

Second year: Geraldine-Fairlie, two miles, £6000 (£1500); Cave-Pareora, three miles, £6000 (£400).

Third year: Geraldine-Fairlie, two miles, £6000 (£1500).

Fourth year: Geraldine-Fairlie, two and three-quarter miles, £4000 (£1500); Fairlie-Monument, two miles, £4000 (£1000).

Fifth year: Fairlie-Monument, three and a half miles, £7000 (£1725); Albury-Burkes Pass, one mile, £2000 (£500).

The chairman, Mr C. V. Kirke, said that he had told the board that because of the mileage of roads in the county, the council could only spend a limited amount of sealing each year. The council would be bound to the first three years of the programme, but the remaining two years would be subject to alteration, Mr Somers said.

In addition to the above, in reply to a request for a proposed bridging programme, the county clerk submitted a list of all the bridges to be renewed within the following ten years, in their order of priority. He pointed out that the estimates were only approximate, as no detailed survey had been made. The programme was dependent on the amounts available each year from the National Roads Board. The following is the list of bridges submitted, with the council's share of cost in parentheses:

Claycliff, £7000 (£2800); Coal Creek, £4000 (£1600); Irishman Creek No. 2, £3000 (£1200); Rhoboro No. 2, £3500 (£1400); Ashwick Station, £5000 (£2000); Cuthbertson's, £2500 (£1000); Opawa Stream, £6000 (£2400); Little Opawa, £3000 (£1200); Guilford's, £2000 (£500); Plantation, £2000 (£500); Mona Vale School, £3000 (£1200); McKerchar's, £8000 (£3200);

Sherwood Creek £2800 (£1120); Moorhead's, £2800 (£1120); Mackenzie Stock Yard, £2000 (£800); Forks River £6000 (£2400); Hut Creek, £3500 (£1400); Pioneer Park, £2500 (£625); Cliff's, £4000 (£1000); Two Bridges, £5000 (£2000); Allandale Station, £3000 (£1200); Irishman Creek No. 1, £4000 (£1600); Haldon Station, £3000 (£1200); Rhoboro No. 1, £3500 (£1400); Coal Pit, £2600 (£1040); Exe Creek, £4000 (£1000); Fraser River, £6000 (£2400); Boundary Creek, £3500 (£1400).

Mr Somers said that the first three-year programme would cost £34,000, of which the county's share would be £13,600; the second three years £24,600 (£12,865); and the last three years £38,600 (£14,240). That would be a total expenditure of £107,200 for the nine years, the county being responsible for £40,705 of that amount. The engineer, Mr G. R. Milward, said the priorities were as near as possible, but were not hard and fast. Mr Kirke said it could be explained to the roads board that it was a tentative programme only. In the event of a flood there might be a case to alter the priorities. This was agreed to.

#### FIVE-YEAR PLAN FOR SEALING HIGHWAYS

The five-year plan for sealing highways adopted by the council on 3rd December 1954, was preceded by a contract accepted for dust-laying seal coat, Fairlie to the Monument main highway, submitted by British Pavements Ltd, for £682/10/- . Then, in May 1955, the National Roads Board advised that it had made available £6750 for resealing on the Geraldine-Fairlie highway, and £3000 for the Cave-Pareora highway.

On 5th August 1955, the council agreed that the Geraldine-Fairlie highway be sealed to a width of 18ft instead of 12ft. The consulting engineer, Mr G. R. Milward, said that he had recently inspected the highway with two engineers from the Ministry of Works, Christchurch. Because of the many curves and grades, the National Roads Board had suggested that the basic sealing width throughout be 18ft, with widening on all sharp corners. The extra average cost, compared with the previous plan of 12ft on the straight and 20ft on the curves, should not exceed £400 a mile. The seal on the curves would still be extended to 20ft. The council adopted the recommendation.

Also, in August 1955, a petition was received enquiring if there was any possibility of the Cattle Valley area being sealed after the Allandale section had been finished. The petition said that the dust had to be experienced and seen to be believed, and was especially unbearable for the women as it filtered into everything in the houses by the roadside. There were numerous army convoys, more and more heavy trucks, buses, and more than a considerable amount of holiday traffic, and it was getting worse every year. In the Mount Michael section, there was only one house which would not have been affected to any degree, as most of the traffic travels at a slower speed in that part of it. It was agreed that the following year's sealing commence at Skiptons bridge in an endeavour to eliminate the dust nuisance.

In November 1955, the council accepted two tenders for sealing. The first was by British Pavements for £1492 to seal the Cave-Pareora highway, and the other by the same firm for £4034 for sealing on the Geraldine-Fairlie highway.

In June 1956, Mr Milward intimated that the plans and specifications for

the Geraldine-Fairlie main highway were ready, and a start would be made that month with the base graveling. The old gravelled surface was worn so thin that a totally new road had to be constructed. The highway for two-way traffic would cost about £6000 a mile for the section near the Skipton bridge end. Other tenders accepted were:

1st February 1957: Sealing main streets in Fairlie. Tender by British Pavements Ltd for £956/10/-.

8th March 1957: Sealing of Cave-Pareora main highway. Tender by British Pavements Ltd for £3093/13/4.

6th December 1957: Sealing main highway 116 (Geraldine-Fairlie). Tender by British Pavements Ltd for £1963.

7th February 1958: Cave-Pareora main highway. Tender by British Pavements Ltd for £1378/14/10.

7th November 1958: Sealing main highway 116 (Geraldine-Fairlie). Tender by British Pavements Ltd for £2899.

4th September 1959: Sealing of main highway 116 (Geraldine-Fairlie). Tender by Hamilton Construction Co. Ltd for £4853/10/-.

13th November 1959: Sealing of main highway 116 (Geraldine-Fairlie). Tender by British Pavements Ltd for £1855/16/8.

2nd December 1960: Sealing Albury-Burkes Pass road. Tender by British Pavements Ltd for £1367/8/3.

2nd December 1960: Sealing Fairlie-Monument road. Tender by British Pavements Ltd for £2707/15/6.

2nd March 1962: Rangitata-Fairlie State Highway 79. Tender by British Pavements Ltd for maintenance seal work for part of this road, £1530/12/6.

2nd March 1962: Mount Nessing Road sealing. Tender by British Pavements Ltd for £1366/13/4.

7th December 1962: The following tenders from British Pavements Ltd were accepted: Cave-Pareora road resealing, £1125/15/-; School Road resealing, £335/0/10; Mackenzie Street resealing, £142/17/6; Fairlie-Monument road, priming flanks and resealing, £1410/16/8; Rangitata-Fairlie State Highway 79, resealing, £2948/19/2.

6th December 1963: Sealing 4½ miles of State Highway 79. Tender by Isaac Construction Co. Ltd for £6808/10/-.

6th December 1963: Clayton Road resealing. Tender by British Pavements Ltd £1456/2/9.

#### LAKE ALEXANDRINA DOMAIN BOARD

Over the years, the Mackenzie County Council has made improvements around Lake Alexandrina, mainly in the nature of improved access, repairing flood damage, and insisting on reasonable standards for camping and fishermen's huts.

This lake is a satellite lake to the west of Lake Tekapo, approximately 665 hectares (1643 acres), and separated from Lake Tekapo by a small lake, Lake McGregor. It is twelve kilometres from Tekapo Village and is reached

via the Glenmore-Godley Peaks road, the main access being a gravel road along the southern shore of Lake McGregor to the Outlet Settlement. There are three settlements of huts, the Outlet, the Southern and the Northern.

Prior to 1954, there was a Lake Alexandrina Domain Board from 1931, but this was revoked in 1954 when the South Canterbury Acclimatisation Society was appointed the new board. In 1956 public toilets were provided, and lakes Alexandrina and McGregor and the surrounding area declared a wildlife refuge.

In October 1962, a letter was received from the Commissioner of Crown Lands, asking the council to agree to its being appointed a domain board, formerly administered by the South Canterbury Acclimatisation Society. It was decided that the county chairman, Mr K. Guy, and the two Tekapo Riding members, Crs J. Allan and J. Scott, be a special committee to meet representatives of campers and the Health Department to discuss the situation, in particular the commissioner's proposal, and the possibility of arranging a camp that season.

Earlier the county clerk said that the fishermen had expressed concern at the proposed closure of the camping ground, and he had discussed the matter with Mr L. R. Williams on behalf of the fishermen members of the Acclimatisation Society. Mr Perrin said it would be a matter for the Health Department. They would have to agree as to what minimum facilities would be required for the camping ground to function that season. The fishermen would be prepared to finance the renovation and cleaning of the required facilities within certain limits. A camping ground committee was set up to administer the camping ground.

On 1st November 1963, the council accepted its appointment as a domain board for the purpose of facilitating the continued use of the Lake Alexandrina fishermen's camping ground. It was reported that the decision was the culmination of discussions between the council, the fishermen's committee, and representatives of the Land and Survey Department over the previous eighteen months. The question originally arose from a request by the Department of Health that requirements for septic tank drainage, an adequate water supply, and the disposal of refuse should be met over a period.

The council attached certain conditions to its decision. The first was that the domain be portion of the Tekapo Domain. It was to be understood that the council could not undertake to make any financial contribution towards maintenance or improvements of the Alexandrina Domain, and that the fishermen's committee continues to administer the area on behalf of the domain board. This meant that because of the legal responsibilities of the board, such committee would be in an advisory capacity, but its duties would be to collect all moneys, either donations or fees, on behalf of the board, maintain the domain, and effect improvements after the authority of the board had been received. In the event of the fishermen's committee failing to carry out these duties, the council would close the domain to camping. There was a condition that the acclimatisation society accept an obligation to assist in providing camping facilities for fishermen, and that the Lands and Survey acknowledge these conditions as reasonable in so far as the council was concerned.

"It is now over to the fishermen's committee — if they fail, so does the camp," said the chairman, Mr Guy.

## THE NAMING OF LAKE ALEXANDRINA

There is a tradition that Lake Alexandrina was named after Alexandrina Robertson, a sister of John and William Robertson, partners with John McGregor and Thomas Macdonald in buying Castle Hall Station from Alfred Cox in 1875. The official version is that it was named in 1862 by Julius Haast (later Sir Julius von Haast) in honour of Princess Alexandra, who married the Prince of Wales (Edward VII) in 1863. The name is shown in a map of New Zealand dated 1868. Alexandrina Robertson was born in Scotland in September 1850, and came to New Zealand in 1869. It is interesting to note that Queen Victoria was christened Alexandrina Victoria. At the moment of writing (June 1983) research is being made into the origin of the name.

## EXTENSIVE BRIDGE BUILDING PROGRAMME

*Oh, for some master's brush, some poet's pen,  
To sketch the bridge connecting Now and Then!  
Oh, wondrous age! with grand achievements fraught,  
Behold the change that fifty years have wrought.*

— Jubilee Day (Thomas Bracken)

During the decade leading up to 1963, there were about twenty-five bridges, together with many culverts, constructed in the Mackenzie County. These culverts would be of many sizes, and no attempt is made to list them here.

The county method of bridge construction since 1950 has mainly been to let a contract for the actual bridge construction, that is, pile-driving and concrete work, with county staff and plant being used to do any river channel work, protection work, road approaches and the like. This means that the tender price does not give the full story, as added to this could be county costs, engineering fees, etc., often up to 50% of the cost of the total project.

A justification of the council's progressive policy was given by Councillor Kenneth Guy in an annual report on finances presented to the council on 1st July 1961. During the past ten years, the council had spent £138,000 in the replacement in concrete of wooden bridges nearing the end of their useful lives, and this progressive policy had helped to minimise the cost of restoring flood damage, he said.

The following is an account of the bridges completed:

### CLAYTON SETTLEMENT BRIDGE

This bridge is on the Clayton Settlement Road over the north branch of the Opuha River, and is 180ft long by 10ft wide. On 3rd September 1954, a tender by A. L. Hamilton for £4580/17/- was accepted.

### EWARTS BRIDGE

This bridge is also on Clayton Road, over the Ribbonwood Stream. It measures 75ft by 12ft. It was built by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £3326/14/- during 1954.

### WATERS BRIDGE

This bridge was at Rollesby Road on the Albury-Burkes Pass highway. In October 1954, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £2122/11/6 was accepted. The dimensions were 30ft by 12ft.

#### CLAYCLIFF BRIDGE

This bridge is situated on the Mount Cook Station road, and measures 60ft by 10ft. On 6th May 1955, the National Roads Board made available £4200 for this bridge, and another £300 in November. A further subsidy of £1360 was forthcoming the following May.

On 12th July 1956, the *Timaru Herald* published a photograph of the new bridge. Giving access over the turbulent streams of the county, it was built under contract for £7500 by the Lakes Construction Co. Ltd. The 60ft span was of steel castellated beams. Two other bridges on the same spot were destroyed when they were covered with large boulders in heavy flooding. The council's share of the cost, £2800, was financed by loan money.

#### ISITT'S BRIDGE

This bridge on the Geraldine-Fairlie highway measures 30ft by 24ft. It was built of reinforced concrete. On 5th August 1955, a tender by the Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £2428/17/6 was accepted.

#### STONELEIGH BRIDGE

This bridge is described as being situated on Back Ashwick Road, and is 40ft by 12ft in size. The council's share of the cost, including approaches, was £1600, financed by loan money. On 2nd December 1955, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £2276/3/3 was accepted. There was a National Roads Board subsidy of £1905.

#### COAL CREEK BRIDGE

Situated on the Lilybank Road, the tender accepted on 1st February 1957 for this bridge was one by the Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £2715/19/8. The dimensions are 120ft by 12ft. The council raised a loan for £3400, and the National Roads Board made £2400 available. Very extensive river control works, cutting channels and stopbanking, were carried out above the bridge site by separate contractors, probably Hamilton Construction Engineering using a D8 dozer on an hourly hire rate. County staff completed the approaches.

#### OPAWA STREAM BRIDGE (RUTHERFORDS)

This bridge is situated on the Opawa Road and measures 50ft by 12ft. On 1st June 1956 a tender by the Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £2900/16/8 was accepted. The council financed this project including approaches to the extent of £2000 loan money.

#### LITTLE OPAWA STREAM BRIDGE

This bridge, 40ft by 12ft, is on Coalpit Road, off Chamberlain Road. On 2nd August 1957, a total tender for two bridges, referred to as Coal Pit and Cuthbertson's by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd, for £3630/16/6 was accepted. The council's share of the cost of Coal Pit bridge was £1800, financed by way of loan.

#### CUTHBERTSON'S BRIDGE

This bridge on Clayton Road measures 40ft by 12ft also. A tender including Coal Pit bridge above was accepted, and in this case the council's share of £1800 was financed by way of loan also.

#### LITTLE OPAWA STREAM BRIDGE

This bridge is also referred to as Fraser Road bridge, and is 40ft by 12ft. On 4th October 1957, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £1645/16/- was accepted.

#### IRISHMAN CREEK BRIDGE

This bridge on Braemar Road is 120ft by 12ft. A tender by the Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £4808/18/9 was accepted on 6th December 1957. The council's share of £3000 was financed by way of loan.

#### FORKS RIVER BRIDGE

This bridge is situated on Braemar Road and measures 120ft by 12ft. A tender by the Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £4964/5/4 was accepted on 4th September 1959. The council's share of the cost, £2600, was financed by way of loan.

#### MACKINTOSH'S BRIDGE

This bridge crosses the Opihi River on Cloudy Peaks Road, and measures 120ft by 10ft 6in. On 19th December 1960, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £3233/19/3, "plus scheduled extras", was accepted.

#### MONA VALE SCHOOL BRIDGE

This is situated on Rocky Gully Road and crosses Coal Creek. It dimensions are 40ft by 12ft. On 4th September 1959, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £1595/15/- was accepted.

#### AVALANCHE CREEK BRIDGE

Situated on Rollesby Road, this bridge measures 30ft by 12ft. On 4th December 1959, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £2411/14/11 was accepted.

#### MACKENZIE STREAM BRIDGE

Situated on Haldon Road, this bridge measures 120ft by 12ft. On 4th August 1961, the Ministry of Works approved a subsidy of £2500, subsidised 2 : 1.

#### WARATAH STREAM BRIDGE

The dimensions of this bridge are 24ft by 12ft. On 4th November 1960, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £1555/0/10 was accepted.

#### EXE CREEK BRIDGE

Situated at Waratah, this bridge measures 50ft x 12ft. On 1st September 1961, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £3290/19/9 was accepted.

#### UPPER TENGAWAI 1, CRICKLEWOOD

The dimensions of this bridge are 240ft by 12ft. On 2nd February 1962, a tender by Husband Bros Ltd for £10,010/12/- was accepted.

#### UPPER TENGAWAI 2, CRICKLEWOOD

The dimensions of this bridge are 40ft by 12ft. On 4th May 1962, a tender by Husband Bros Ltd for £2721 was accepted.

#### BULLOCKY CREEK BRIDGE

This bridge on Haldon Road measures 40ft by 12ft. On 6th April 1962, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £2319/4/7 was accepted.

#### CARTERS BRIDGE

This bridge, crossing the Opuha (Cora Lynn) Stream, measures 50ft by 10ft 6in. It is a steel beam bridge, rebuilt at a higher level in 1961. On 3rd November a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £1375/7/4 for decking only was accepted.

#### MOORHEAD'S STREAM BRIDGE

Situated on Plantation Road, this bridge measures 40ft by 12ft. On 7th December 1962 a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £2505/18/5 was accepted.

#### ALLANDALE BRIDGE

The Lakes Construction Co. Ltd submitted a tender for £3601/8/6 for the redecking of this bridge, but this was above the estimate. This was reduced by £436, the diagonal bracing and handrails being eliminated from the specifications. The tender of £3165/8/6 was accepted. The Ministry of Works approved of the new tender being accepted, but expressed surprise that the contract had not been advertised in the Christchurch papers. This bridge has since been replaced in 1970 by a reinforced concrete structure, 340ft by 24ft.

#### RAINCLIFF (CLIFFS) BRIDGE

This bridge is on Middle Valley Road, dimensions 135ft by 12ft. On 5th July 1963, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £5912/12/4 was accepted. The council found £2000 in loan money.

#### RAINCLIFF BRIDGE

This bridge over the Opipi River is a boundary bridge with the Levels County (now Strathallan County), Mackenzie County and Strathallan each paying half the local share. It is administered by Strathallan County, Levels advising as early as 1953 that it intended to renew this bridge, described as on the Pleasant Point to Fairlie highway, and asked the council to meet its share: 1957/8 £8000, 1958/9 £10,000, total £18,000; but the council's share would be £1000 and £1250, total £2250. The council agreed to its share of the cost of the bridge.

#### STANTON ROAD BRIDGE

The dimensions of this bridge were given as 24ft by 12ft. On 1st November 1963, a tender by the Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £2282/9/9 was accepted.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1954

##### FAIRLIE BRIGADE

In June the Fire Service Council advised that for emergency fires the Fairlie brigade was included in the Timaru region. The Timaru fire officer had been appointed regional officer.

##### TREE PLANTING

In October, the county foreman, Mr H. Welsh, reported that 22,000 trees had been planted that year. Of this number, 2500 were planted in the Cave plantation, 5500 in the Fairlie yard plantation, and 14,000 in Mackintosh's.

#### HARBOUR BOARD

Mr Peter Kidd junior was appointed to represent Albury and Tekapo ridings on the harbour board in succession to his father who had died recently. He is still a member of the board (1983).

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1955

##### HEAVY FISHING TRAFFIC

It was reported in October that although the Braemar, Godley Peaks and Richmond roads had been well graded, such had been the density of fishing traffic that these roads were in the process of being gouged out.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1956

##### RURAL HOUSING LOAN

In August approval was given to raise a loan of £5000 for rural housing purposes. Three advances totalling £5450 were approved.

##### FOOTBALL AT TIMARU

The county staff were given sufficient time off to see the South African football team at Timaru on 28th July 1956.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1957

##### HERMITAGE DESTROYED

On 16th September, the Hermitage was destroyed by fire. It had been heavily booked for tourists during the four summer months. There was insurance cover of about £170,000.

##### DR T. M. O'BRIEN

In May, Dr and Mrs O'Brien were farewelled after ten years residence in Fairlie.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1958

##### MOUNT COOK HERMITAGE LODGE

The new Hermitage Lodge at Mount Cook, replacing the hotel destroyed by fire, was opened on 29th May 1958 by the Prime Minister, the Rt Hon. Walter Nash. The new structure cost £350,000.

##### RURAL HOUSING

Application was made for a further loan of £10,000.

##### VISIT OF LORD COBHAM

The vice-regal visit of Lord and Lady Cobham on 18th November 1958 was a very short one. About 1000 residents and children attended the civic reception in the high school grounds. The party then visited the Cave Memorial Church built by the late Mr T. D. Burnett.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1961

##### LIBRARIAN RESIGNS

Mrs R. Elms resigned as she was moving into her own house, but would carry on if she could be provided with some assistance. On 6th October Mrs M. E. Rogers was appointed assistant librarian.

#### FLOOD DAMAGE GRANTS

In October the Ministry of Works announced a subsidy of £3976/3/4 and a free grant of £4723 to be paid on flood damage.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1962

##### MRS R. ELMS

On 2nd March, Mrs R. Elms was farewelled by the council on her retirement as librarian, a position which she held since 1949. She was presented with a Clifford Brunsden painting of Lake Tekapo. Mrs R. E. Rogers, the assistant librarian, was appointed to succeed Mrs Elms.

##### FAIRLIE CORONER

In September, Mr B. W. Perrin, the county clerk, was appointed district coroner at Fairlie.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1963

##### TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANK

In July the council decided to support the proposal to establish a trustee savings bank in South Canterbury, but that the organising committee be advised that it is unable to support the project financially.

##### DALGETY STREAM

It was decided that the creek known as Mackenzie Creek, which runs on the east side of Mackenzie Pass, be known as Dalgety Stream.

##### RETIREMENT AGE OF STAFF

It was decided that employees be retired at the age of sixty-five, but the council reserves the right to retain the services of any particular employee until a replacement can be found for him.

# 11

## The Ninth Decade, 1964-1973

### ALLANDALE WATER SUPPLY

As far back as December 1962, the Ministry of Works was asked by the council to request the Department of Agriculture to undertake an economic survey of a proposed Allandale water supply scheme. Fairlie and Opuha riding members, Crs B. J. O'Neill, P. F. Carter, G. E. Jones and R. M. Rapley, had discussed the proposed supply with representatives at a meeting on 7th November, and it appeared that sufficient property owners were interested in the proposal to ensure a successful reticulation.

The matter was raised again on 6th February 1964 by Cr B. J. O'Neill who said that members of the Allandale water supply committee were concerned that there appeared to be no action on their plans for the scheme. The council had given its blessing to the proposals, and the Department of Agriculture economic survey had been favourable. The plan was referred to the Ministry of Works for approval, but nothing had been heard from that department. The lack of action, coupled with the current drought, was causing some concern. The council agreed to ask the Minister of Lands (the Hon. R. G. Gerard), as the area member of Parliament, to take up the matter urgently with the Ministry of Works.

In April, Mr H. R. Wise of Oamaru, who had been appointed consulting engineer for this project, stated that the water supply scheme followed the lines of several successful North Otago schemes, where water was provided for hill country by pumping up to a control reservoir, and thence gravitating to supply points in the various properties. Each ratepayer could then gravitate the water to farm troughs at his own expense. On account of pumping costs it was essential that there be no water wastage. Ratepayers could install large storage tanks if they wished, so that if the 400 gallons a day was not used, it could be stored for emergencies.

The vital part of the scheme was the provision of an intake from the Opuha River, and the pumping of the water to a 40,000-gallon reservoir some 500ft above the level of the river. In order to supply electric power to the pump-house, a pole line about one and a half miles long was required. The power board would install the line free of charge, provided that about £100 a year guarantee was given for power.

No time could have been lost, as the council was told on 1st May that the water supply reservoir was half complete. Cr P. F. Carter said that co-operation between consumers had been good, and they had received all the

help needed. The consulting engineer (Mr Wise) had inspected the work and was pleased with the progress. Over ten days about 600 hours of voluntary labour had gone into the project. Cr B. J. O'Neill said it had been a wonderful voluntary effort.

On 1st May 1964, the Ministry of Works advised that approval had been given of a subsidy of £1 for £2 (£7000) for the water supply, and suggested early submissions of drawings to clear the way for any subsequent loan sanction. It was also decided that two eight-stage pumping units with 15h.p. motors as recommended by Mr Wise be purchased from Messrs Brown Brothers. A tender of £286/7/3 by Gillies Foundry and Engineering Co. for reservoir steel was accepted. A special meeting of the council on the same day constituted the Allandale Water Race District.

In October it was decided to raise a loan of £8000 for twenty years at 5½%. In December the Order in Council consenting to the raising of the loan came through. An application to the National Provident Fund for the amount had been successful, and the finance would be available early the following year.

On 5th February 1965, the catchment board approved of the intake site, pointing out that approval did not give the council the right to pump any specified quantity of water from the river, as the onus for ensuring that the riparian rights of owners are not infringed lay with the council. On 9th July, the county chairman, Mr K. Guy, complimented Cr O'Neill, Cr Carter and their committee on the official opening of the scheme. The cost of the scheme was £23,997, including farmers' labour, and was the figure upon which subsidy was paid out. Internal farm reticulation costs were extra to this, as each was the responsibility of the individual farmer.

An annual meeting of the ratepayers of the water supply district was held in May 1967. Subsequently reporting to the Mackenzie council, the chairman of the committee, Cr O'Neill, said the year had been one of consolidation and improvement to the scheme, which was proving beneficial to stock in the district, particularly lambs. Clear water could be pumped in during any minor flood. A cable car across the river had been installed, and had given all-weather access to the electricity servicemen. He regretted little progress had been made in the repair of some settlers' tanks. In view of the financial position, the annual charges had been reduced from £15 per point to £11 per point. The members of the committee were: Chairman, Cr O'Neill; secretary, Mr J. Washington; committee, Messrs R. King, P. Carter, H. Williams, R. Crampton and J. Young.

#### DOWNLANDS WATER FOR ALBURY

In June 1964, the question of a water supply for Albury was raised at a meeting of the Mackenzie County Council. The chairman, Mr K. Guy, said that the residents had for some time been requesting a public supply, and it was decided to make preliminary investigations. On the motion of Cr H. W. Fisher it was decided to make application for reticulation from the Downlands water supply. The chairman said that if this was not available, it would be necessary to put forward proposals for a supply from another source.

Then, in October, the consulting engineer, Mr G. R. Milward, reported that, subject to the approval of about sixteen consumers, Albury township

would be connected to the Downlands water supply scheme that year. A meeting of residents was held to consider the matter. The cost of £500 would have to be met by the consumers. It was pointed out that in 1960 the cost of utilising a spring in the township had been investigated, but the cost was excessive for the number of persons involved. With the connection to the Downlands scheme, no high-pressure taps would be permitted, and delivery would be into ball-cock tanks.

On 9th October the Downlands water supply committee approved proposals for the new £500 reticulation scheme for Albury, the committee accepting responsibility for the cost of maintaining street mains and ball-cocks. It would not assume responsibility for the extensions to the reticulation, or for the enlargement of pipes.

In June 1966, the chairman, Mr H. W. Fisher, considered that the supply should be extended to include recent applications from residents in Mount Nessing road. He thought, however, that an application by the council to the Downlands water supply committee for approval to extend the Albury township supply had a greater chance of success than several individual applications. However, in August he reported that the Mount Nessing road extension had been completed during the month.

#### NAMING AND RENAMING OF ROADS

On 10th July 1964, a special meeting of the council was held to consider the naming and renaming of roads in the Mackenzie County. Mr K. Guy was chairman and there was a full attendance of councillors. Cr P. F. Carter moved, and Cr R. M. Rapley seconded, the following resolution which took exactly ten minutes to pass:

"That pursuant to powers conferred upon it by the Counties Act, 1956, the Mackenzie County Council hereby resolves, by way of special order, as follows:

1. To name roads throughout the county of Mackenzie as detailed in the first schedule hereunder.
2. To alter road names throughout the county of Mackenzie as detailed in the second schedule hereunder.

#### FIRST SCHEDULE

Opuha Gorge Road	Clayton Settlement Road
Lochaber Road	Lilybank Road
Ashwick Flat Road	Monument Road
Stoneleigh Road	Strathallan Road
Springs Road	Pusey Road
Stanton Road	Three Springs Road
Trotters Road	Oldfields Road
Te Puke Road	Struthers Street
Gillingham Street	Opihi Gorge Road
McLeans Road	Connors Road
Eskdale Road	Pahau Downs Road
Hunterslea Road	Rollesby Station Road
Koorong Road	Otama Road

SECOND SCHEDULE

<i>New Name</i>	<i>Previous Name</i>
Meikleburn Saddle	Tripps Pass
Mowbray Road	Meikles
Hamilton Road	Ashwick to Allandale
Middle Valley Road	Kakahu and Burkes Pass Main Road
Trentham Road	Mount Michael Road
Talbot Road	Talbot Street
North Street	Hamilton Street (Reserve)
Denmark Street (east side of S.H. 8)	Mackenzie Road
Kirke Street	Manse Street
Chamberlain Road	Mackenzie Pass and Blainslie Road
Coalpit Road	Mackenzie Pass
Waratah Road	Mackenzie Pass
Rollesby Valley Road	Mackenzie Pass
Haldon Road	Burkes Pass Road
Opawa Road	Rutherfords
Ardmore Road	Scotts "

The motion was carried.

**A REGIONAL PLANNING MOVE**

On Wednesday, 2nd June 1965, a meeting of South Canterbury local body representatives was held in Timaru to hear an address by the Northern Regional Planning Authority's chairman and officer, Messrs Hosking and Bagnall respectively, and the Canterbury District Commissioner of Works, Mr D. B. Dallis.

The county chairman, Mr K. Guy, reporting on the meeting to the council, said he could not see any advantages for the Mackenzie in the establishment of a regional planning authority, but he would agree that such an organisation would be valuable in built-up areas, with closely knitted rural districts adjoining. He described the regional planning authority as an ad hoc local body specialising in land use control. A staff would direct efforts to bring about order and compact development. He had no doubt about the worth of such an authority in an urban area where there is rapid development taking place.

Quoting Whangarei as a classic example of considerable progress in a city and adjoining counties, he said that they had seen the need as far back as 1958. Although the costs would not be very high for the Mackenzie County Council, 1/50th of a penny in the pound, the advantages would not be particularly great in such a widespread area as Mackenzie. The council had already contracted with consultants for the district scheme planned, and the Timaru City Council had its own staff to operate a district scheme.

In reply to a question by Cr B. J. O'Neill, Mr Guy said there would be no coercion. Membership would be voluntary. Two councils could form an authority, but he thought a regional planning officer would duplicate the functions of their public relations officer to some extent.

## ANOTHER AMALGAMATION MOVE

No sooner had the question of forming a regional authority been disposed of, than, in the same month, the Mackenzie County Council showed interest in another proposed amalgamation, this time with the Levels County Council. A proposal had been made by Cr H. G. M. Steven of Levels, that the two counties should amalgamate. The Mackenzie council chairman, Mr K. Guy, said he thought the proposal a bit ahead of its time. Amalgamation could only be brought about by negotiation, and when the Levels council felt the time was opportune, the Mackenzie County would be prepared to meet it.

In August the Mackenzie County Council decided to invite the Levels County Council to discuss amalgamation, but when the latter turned down the proposal the matter was dropped, and a letter was sent to the Levels council thanking it for its earnest consideration of the subject, and expressed the hope that the cordial relationships which had always existed between them would continue in the future.

Mr Guy said that, unlike the sheep stealer of the same name, the Mackenzie County Council had no desire to raid the Levels County and help itself to the assets and prosperity of that district.

Apparently the matter was still in the air in September 1966, when the then chairman, Mr H. W. Fisher, said his council would be only too happy to discuss amalgamation with Levels. "It is rather interesting to note," said Mr Fisher, "that there are only six bigger counties in New Zealand than Mackenzie. Several of them contain large waste areas, and one of them has a population of only fifty. Of our 2820 square miles, more than 2000 are in one riding. Our capital value might be high by some standards, but because of the rapid advances in farm and station management, and tourist attraction developments during the next few years, it is natural that we should have increasing growing pains."

## SOUTHERN ALPS TUNNEL

In 1937, Mr T. D. Burnett, M.P., wanted to put a tunnel road through the hill at Cave, but in 1966 Mr A. D. Dick, M.P., went one better — he wanted a tunnel road through the Southern Alps.

"There has been considerable publicity given to this matter, and I think we should give full support in principle to Mr Dick's scheme," said the county chairman, Mr H. W. Fisher. "Mr Dick had shown far-sighted vision. It could be some time before there is any action, but such a scheme could be of great benefit to this county, with the provision of a round-trip for tourists. There could be another route to the Hermitage with a bridge span over the Tasman River."

Cr J. Allan seconded the resolution to support the idea, and said it might be some time before there was any real action, but now was the time to give it thought and investigation. Cr Allan said it could benefit not only the Mackenzie County and the whole of South Canterbury, but the rest of New Zealand.

Cr J. Scott agreed, and said he could foresee terrific advantages. Tekapo was on the threshold of great development, and such a road could be a necessity.

## THE SITING OF TWIZEL VILLAGE

As it was believed that the siting of the proposed new township of the Upper Waitaki Power Development Scheme would be between the Twizel and Ohau rivers, the Lands and Survey Department in February 1966 asked the Mackenzie County Council for its opinion on the naming of the village. The department said the name "Twizelbank" had been proposed, but the council preferred "Twizelburn". Cr J. Allan said many people in the region prefer Twizelburn as most of them are of Scottish descent, and consider "burn" more in keeping with the history of the region. Neither suffix was added to the name, which was thereafter referred to as Twizel Village, and then Twizel.

The council pressed for the siting of the township to be associated with the power development scheme in the Upper Waitaki area. They made representations to various ministers, stating that they favoured a site about three miles to the south-east of Pukaki.

On 9th September 1966, a letter was received from the Minister of Works, Mr P. B. Allen, making it clear that he was firm that the choice of a site between Lake Pukaki and Ohau River, on the banks of the Twizel, was the correct one. In quite a lengthy letter he gave reasons for rejecting the site proposed by the council.

The area was terminal glacial moraine containing large boulders, gravels and fine silt. The boulder intensity was heavy, and the ground sloped toward the lake, both of which would make site development and installation of services extremely expensive. There was no suitable source of water supply, the water of Lake Pukaki being contaminated with glacial till. The most suitable portion of the area would be inundated with the scheme for raising Lake Pukaki. The site was sheltered from the morning sun by the background hills, and exposed to the full force of the north-west wind, and the dust it carried when the lake is low. It would be seven miles from construction activities, and there was no flat ground adjacent for the erection of workshop and store buildings.

Among the advantages of the site chosen at Twizel, Mr Allen included: being flat and free from boulders, site development would be quicker and cheaper, and there was ample room to make amenities such as playing fields, golf course, etc., for the workers and their families. The soil was good, making the establishment of gardens and shelter belts an easier proposition. He pointed out that the site nearer Pukaki was virtually devoid of trees.

Mr Allen said that a good supply of water for the village was available close at hand. He pointed out that there would be no loss of land to run-holders, and that it was close to the airstrip operated by Mount Cook Airways. Considerable travelling time would be avoided, a large proportion of the construction traffic would be kept off the public highway, and high traffic density would be avoided at the start and finish of the working day.

After dealing with service facilities, Mr Allen concluded by saying, "Although the council was not consulted on the choice of a site, some of its members were fully aware of its location at the time the land was purchased by the Crown in July 1965."

## FLATS FOR PENSIONERS

On 1st April 1966, the council passed a resolution that the county town committee be advised that in the council's opinion the corner of Frayne Street and Hamilton Street was the most suitable site for pensioner housing. The town committee had recommended that investigations be carried out to ascertain whether suitable building sites were available closer to the shopping area.

The county chairman, Mr H. W. Fisher, said that investigations had been carried out, and the Health Department inspector had said that the site was quiet and peaceful. Cr R. M. Rapley said shopkeepers were willing to deliver to Hamilton Street. It was agreed that no more suitable site was available.

However, the following month the council decided to reconsider the siting of the flats which it was proposed to erect in Hamilton Street. The council had been requested by the town committee, and the New Zealand Registered Nurses Association, to inspect alternative sites closer to the main shopping centre of the town. After doing so, the council instructed the town committee to call a special meeting to bring down a recommendation on the most suitable site, and an alternative, to the next council meeting. The consulting engineer was also instructed to prepare plans for the cottages.

The June meeting agreed that the site should be on the main highway and Hamilton Street, but again a reversal decision was arrived at in July when the site was fixed on the town committee's second choice, in Mount Cook Road. A letter from the district medical officer of health (Dr R. D. Bailey) stated that the site in the main highway was unsuitable.

The next significant step forward was an announcement in May 1967, by the member for Ashburton, Mr R. L. G. Talbot, that a subsidy of up to £4625 had been granted to the council to assist it to erect one double and four single pensioners' flats in Fairlie. He had received this advice from the Minister of Health, Hon. D. N. McKay. The cost of the scheme was to be £11,500, the maximum subsidy for each flat being £925. The council decided to raise a loan for the balance of £6875 at  $3\frac{1}{2}\%$  over 30 years to complete the scheme.

However, when the matter came up again in August, the amount of the loan required was £13,750, but this was to buy the land also. In November it was announced that the Mackenzie Lodge No. 93 had made an approach to the Canterbury Masonic Charitable Trust, resulting in a donation of £1044 for the purpose of carpeting the living rooms and bedrooms of the flats. The grateful thanks and appreciation of the council was conveyed to the trust, and also to the Mackenzie lodge for its effort in this regard.

On 13th September 1968, stated to be built at a cost of £25,000, and situated on Mount Cook Road, the five units were officially opened by Mr H. W. Fisher. The newspaper report said that, raising his voice to be heard above the gale-force nor'-wester which howled across the Mackenzie country, Mr Fisher declared the flats open. More than 100 people attended the opening, but because of the force of the wind, which carried with it stinging clouds of dust, many remained in their cars parked in Mount Cook Road.

The chairman of the council's housing committee, Cr P. F. Carter, paid tribute to the work done by the amenities committee, which comprised representatives of the R.S.A. and the Fairlie Aged Persons Council, which had provided outside lights, drapes and a rotary clothes line for the flats. He also thanked the builders, Neill and Brunton, the previous chairman, Cr

G. E. Jones, and Crs R. M. Rapley and B. J. O'Neill for the work they had done to complete the accommodation. The town chairman, Mr A. W. Barwood, said the flats were a great asset to Fairlie — "The site was previously a wilderness in the town."

#### TEKAPO WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE SCHEME

In August 1966, the Mackenzie County Council endorsed a water supply and sewerage scheme for the Tekapo township. The consulting engineer, Mr G. R. Milward, estimated the cost at £44,000, and suggested that the scheme could result in a financial return of about £65,000, and that immediate reticulation would provide for 1000 persons. It was agreed that the chairman, the clerk, and the engineer discuss the report with the Commissioner of Crown Lands and Chief Surveyor, and that copies of the report be forwarded to the Health Department, Lands and Survey Department, Electricity Department, the Ministry of Works, the Minister of Lands, the Minister of Internal Affairs, and Mr A. D. Dick, M.P.

On 30th June 1970, the Local Authorities Loans Board sanctioned the raising of a loan of \$11,000 (not pounds, as decimal currency had come in on 10th July 1967) for the purpose of installing sewerage reticulation, sewerage treatment works and a water supply in Lake Tekapo village. The term was to be for thirty-five years, and interest at not more than 6%.

In February 1971 the council expressed alarm at delays in financing the scheme. The latest estimated cost of the project was \$74,700, but the Department of Health had refused to provide a subsidy on the contributions to be made by the Lands and Survey Department, New Zealand Electricity Department and the National Roads Board.

Pointing out the steep rise in costs over the previous two years, the engineer summarising the 1971 estimates prices listed the following totals: Sewerage treatment works including dual pumps and rising main, \$30,400; 4in sewerage laterals (cost recoverable from connection fees), \$2000; reticulation costs, \$32,000; water supply (mainly for Lands and Survey Department), \$10,300. Total \$74,700. Tenders had been called, closing 5th November 1970, for sewerage and treatment works. Two tenders had been received for \$56,823.67 and \$46,211.50 respectively, but the lower tender was \$8565 above the estimate for the main portion of the project. After considering new estimates and distribution of costs, the council agreed to apply to the Loans Board for an additional loan of \$15,500 for a thirty-five year period to finance the whole scheme, sewerage reticulation and treatment works, and water system.

Meanwhile, in October, the council had adopted a scheme plan for a proposed residential sub-division of Crown land at Tekapo, providing for 115 residential sections. The proposal to have carriageways only, without footpaths, was not favoured. It was decided that the roads were to have 30ft carriageways plus two 6ft-wide footpaths.

On 23rd December 1971, a contract for \$51,235.72, submitted by Hamilton Cartwright Ltd, was accepted, and it was said that the work would start in a week or two. The project would cost about \$75,000 in all, the Lands and Survey Department contributing \$32,070, Department of Health subsidy \$10,401, National Roads Board \$1500, New Zealand Electricity Department \$3500, and the Mackenzie County Council \$27,529.

## OXIDATION PONDS AT FAIRLIE

On 24th April 1968, the Fairlie County Town Committee considered a report by the consulting engineer and recommended to the Mackenzie County Council an oxidation ponds scheme for complete sewerage treatment at Fairlie. The report said that the estimated cost of constructing the oxidation pond would be about \$15,000 compared with an estimated \$29,000 for improvements to the existing Imhoff tank treatment plant.

The proposed site was to be at the lower end of the domain property, just below the Imhoff tank, and would take the form of a  $2\frac{1}{2}$ -acre pond, into which raw sewage would be discharged, followed by a  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -acre pond for secondary treatment. No details had been drawn up at that point, but it was considered that the whole plant, including land purchase, engineering fees, etc., could be constructed for \$15,000.

In May the committee considered a further report which included the pond, but also the installation of a 12in pipe down School Road and Talbot Street as a relief sewer to overcome flooding problems. The committee received a letter from the Fairlie Golf Club expressing fears that an offensive odour would affect the area of the golf course. This raised the question of additional cost if it were decided to shift the ponds from their proposed site adjacent to the No. 7 green and No. 8 tee of the golf course.

Referring to costs, the county clerk, Mr B. J. Dwyer, said sewerage treatment was estimated to cost \$15,000, half of which would be paid by the Health Department. The relief interception drain was estimated to cost \$13,000, involving the committee in a total cost of \$20,500. The consulting engineer said the work had been designed to be accomplished as cheaply as possible. The ponds were not claimed to be "smell-free", but any odour could only be detected within a distance of 50ft to 60ft of the ponds. To resite the ponds about five chains from where they were would cost an additional \$1000.

In July the council received two objections to its advertised intention to construct a sewerage treatment works and install an additional sewer main in the Fairlie township. However, the council decided to apply for sanction to borrow \$21,500 to carry out the works. The loan was for a period of thirty-five years.

In May 1969, an unforeseen difficulty arose. The Ministry of Works made a request that an alternative site be investigated to give a clearance of 1000 feet from any residence. This required the extension of the 15in pipe by approximately 5600 feet. A longer outlet pipe between the lower pond and the creek would be required (about 400 feet extra), and approximately six acres of land was required to be bought from Mr Coutts. This would raise the cost to \$24,000, necessitating a loan of \$12,000 instead of \$10,125.

Later in the month Mr J. R. Fougere addressed the town committee concerning the sewerage treatment and oxidation ponds, saying that the present system was inadequate as it was too easily overloaded. He also described other types of sewerage treatment, and Mr A. W. Barwood said oxidation ponds were the only practical solution. Considerable debate took place on the best method of treatment, some members expressing doubts as to whether the ponds would give off an offensive odour. The committee approved of the

scheme by three votes to two and one abstention. They then resolved that a sub-committee be appointed to investigate, inspect and report on alternative sites available, and that a decision be sought from the health and agriculture departments as to the distance the oxidation ponds would have to be sited away from Mr Coutts's slaughterhouse in order not to affect the issue of the relative slaughterhouse licence.

This produced a rejoinder from the county chairman, Mr H. W. Fisher, who said he could not understand why there had been such a fuss by the town committee about oxidation ponds. Cr Carter said he could not understand the committee's decision to go into further research. Cr H. C. Anderson said there was no proof that oxidation ponds were 100% satisfactory. He said that in twelve years there would be two feet of sludge. "You can't tell me there won't be any smell." He said that if treatment stations were provided, we would be thanked by future generations.

In June the town committee's sub-committee reported that there was little alternative to positioning the ponds as first proposed. The Health Department then recommended that the ponds be sited a minimum distance of 1000 feet from present and future residential areas, except where single isolated dwellings were concerned, in which case it would be reduced to a minimum of 500 feet. The Department of Agriculture did not give a definite reply, and said that they would arrange for a senior meat inspector from Christchurch to call and discuss the matter.

In February 1970, the town committee decided to advise the Minister of Works of an agreement to site oxidation ponds that were 1000 feet from the residential areas. Asked if the ponds would make an difference to the slaughterhouse, the chairman, Mr C. A. Gallagher, said that the Department of Agriculture had replied that it would make no difference.

In September, the council decided to apply to the Loans Board for permission to borrow \$29,400 for thirty-five years at not more than 6%. Tenders were called for sewerage treatment works, also approximately 4500 feet of 9in, 12in and 15in trunk sewers. In May 1971, the council accepted a tender by Hamilton Cartwright Ltd for \$45,506 on the recommendation of the town committee. The financing of the project was: loan, \$29,400; subsidy, \$15,400; supplementary loan, \$2900; petroleum tax revenue, \$2556. A news item said the work would be finished on 3rd April 1972 in preparation for the change-over from old sewer lines to the new system.

#### ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION MERGER

Although it was said that it was public knowledge that negotiations had been going on for some months, when the announcement was made in November 1969 that the Electricity Distribution Commission's approval was being sought to the merger of the South Canterbury Electric Power Board and the Mackenzie County Council's electricity department, it caused quite a stir of protest.

It was not the merger itself that was objected to, but the secrecy with which it was conducted, and a refusal to divulge the terms until the commission's approval had been obtained. Representatives of the board and the county council had met under the chairmanship of the county chairman, Mr H. W. Fisher, who, in a statement after the meeting, said that in its deliberations the

council had adopted a strictly non-parochial attitude, and had concerned itself solely with determining whether or not a merger would be in the interests of its existing consumers.

When asked for his comments, the manager of the power board, Mr E. R. Comer, said that the terms of the merger would be made known after the commission's approval, and Mr Fisher said he would add nothing further until the matter had been before the commission. This produced two leading articles in the *Timaru Herald*. The first alleged that, the previous April, Mr Comer had dismissed the suggestion that talks were pending or under way, as "just a rumour," and the following month he flatly declined to comment. It was the chairman of the commission, Mr W. S. McLean, who confirmed that discussions were going on with the commission's approval. The *Herald* said, that whatever the motivation, it had apparently lent the conduct of the two local bodies a dictatorial touch, which local body administration would be better without.

In a statement detailing the history of the undertaking, the county chairman denied allegations of a dictatorial attitude, and said it was a great pity that the *Herald* had not ascertained the procedure to be followed in such a merger, prior to making the allegations that it had. The Electricity Distribution Commission Act 1967 set out the procedure quite clearly, and that had been followed.

The merger took effect on 1st April 1970. The board took over and became absolute owners of all assets from the Mackenzie electric undertaking. It also assumed responsibility and liability for all loans, sundry creditors and other liabilities. There were also other precautions covered in the merger, and the compensation to be paid to the Mackenzie County Council was \$55,000, to be paid by the South Canterbury Electric Power Board over a two-year period.

#### TEKAPO DISTRICT PLANNING SCHEME

A short press report dated 8th May 1971 seems to be the only notice that was taken of the concluding meeting of the Tekapo Planning Commission that had served the county well since it was first appointed in 1939. The original members were Dr L. S. Talbot (chairman), Dr E. S. Stubbs (Oamaru), Mr T. D. Burnett, M.P., Mr G. Hunter-Weston, and Crs G. Murray and W. Scott. Over the years there had been many additions and deletions, but the ultimate climax of the work of the commission was the completion of an operative district planning scheme for the Lake Tekapo district. The scheme became operative on 6th November 1970, and the final meeting of the commission was on 21st April 1971.

On 2nd February 1968, the scheme was first advertised and objections called for. In May the planning consultants, Messrs Davie, Lovell-Smith and Partners, recommended that the council lodge five specific objections relating to the extension of the residential zone, designated land, conditional use applications, and the definition of licensed hotels and residential section sizes. They considered the scheme to be too lavish, and a reduction of the housing area was suggested.

The report said that the existing residential zone for the village and environs, when fully developed, would provide for a population of about 2500



FAIRLIE MAIN STREET, 1983





FAIRLIE LIBRARY, 1983

Mrs D. Ward (Librarian) and Mrs T. M. Jones (Assistant)



FAIRLIE VOLUNTEER FIRE BRIGADE, 1983

Back Row: Senior Fireman A. Calder, Firemen G. McConnochie, D. Wilson, I. Patterson, T. Breen, G. Smith, G. Haugh, A. Edmonston.  
Centre Row: Senior Fireman and Secretary B. Rooney, Sub-Officer R. Gardner, Station Officer M. Herlund, Station Officer J. Irving, 3rd Officer M. Campbell, Deputy Chief Fire Officer C. McKinnon, Chief Fire Officer N. W. Miles.  
Front Row: Firemen I. Edmonston, W. Dixon, K. Johnston, J. Edmonston, A. Noble, S. Gray.

persons. It provided for residential areas of urban land: residential (three stages), 205 acres; commercial, 5 acres; industrial, 5 acres; streets (assessed at 20% of total), 55 acres; total, 270 acres. The consultants said, "Unless there is some unforeseen change in the development of the Tekapo district, it is considered that the present residential zone is too large, and should be reduced by deleting stages two and three." It was pointed out that the scheme must be reviewed every five years, and changes could be made at any time within these five-year periods. When it was finally approved, there was a stipulation that in each street there be two footpaths, 6ft wide, and that all telephone lines must be installed underground.

When the council was advised that the Tekapo Planning Commission had wound up, it confirmed the appointment of the Lake Tekapo Development Commission to advise the council on development in that district. On the recommendation of the outgoing commission, it nominated as members of the new commission the county chairman (Mr H. W. Fisher), the Tekapo Riding members (Crs J. Allan and M. G. H. Murray), the resident engineer of the Ministry of Works (Mr E. R. L. O'Toole), the project engineer at Twizel (Mr S. M. J. Smith), Mr R. L. G. Talbot (M.P. for South Canterbury), Messrs J. W. Simpson, A. Don, G. Scott, H. Hunter-Weston, G. R. Milward, K. J. Andrews, A. S. Abernethy, J. Stubbs and A. R. Dale.

The "Mackenzie County District Scheme. Section One — Tekapo Village and Environs" was adopted by the council at its meeting held on 1st August 1969.

#### ALBURY RURAL WATER SUPPLY

A public meeting was held in September 1969 to discuss a proposed piped rural water supply to the upper Albury area. The meeting asked the consulting engineer to prepare a design and estimate the costs, and appointed the following committee: Messrs J. Simpson (chairman), J. L. Austin (deputy chairman), A. Barr (secretary), W. Moynihan, E. O'Sullivan, M. Ross, D. Cunningham, J. Stewart and J. Groundwater.

On 3rd July 1970, the Mackenzie County Council approved a draft proposal of a \$142,000 Albury water supply scheme of which the Albury Water Supply Committee had already approved. The council decided to apply to the Local Authorities Loans Board for a loan of \$76,052 to pay the ratepayers' share of the scheme, the loan to be repayable over twenty-five years, interest not exceeding 6%. The scheme was to include the Limestone Valley, Camp Valley, Chamberlain, Mount Nessing, Albury, and parts of the Rocky Gully areas, covering 25,500 acres.

In a report to the council, the consulting engineer, Mr J. R. Fougere, said the scheme was designed to supply water to specified tank positions on each property in the area. It would be capable of supplying, at a continuous flow, nine gallons per acre per day to those properties not partly fed by a permanent natural supply. In addition, thirteen units were to be supplied for ten separate houses, two halls and a golf club. Using 400 gallons per day as a unit, the scheme was capable of supplying 582 units or 233,000 gallons per day. The water supply committee had requested 280 points.

Every ratepayer in the area had agreed to take some water, but parts of some properties were already adequately served by permanent springs and

streams. The Regional Water Board had granted the council the right to draw water from the south branch of the Opawa River at a rate of 240,000 gallons a day. The proposed intake was at a level of 1920 feet above sea level, and about 1½ miles upstream from the point where the river leaves Mount Nessing Road.

As to finance, there would be a Government subsidy of one-third of the total cost. Prospective consumers had signed up for capital-labour contributions totalling \$18,815, leaving \$76,052 to be raised by loan. The annual costs for 280 points would be: loan charges, \$5904; chlorine, fuel etc., \$431; maintenance, \$1025; making a total of \$7360. For 280 units the cost per unit would be about \$26.

In March 1971, the council called tenders and decided to raise a loan of \$76,000, the balance of the project to be found by a Government subsidy of \$47,400, and consumers' contributions, \$18,800, making a total of \$142,200. James Hardie and Co. supplied 17½ miles of asbestos cement pipes for \$69,000, plus extras approximating \$1000. Englefield Plastic Industries Ltd supplied polythene pipes, ¾in to 1in, for \$6000, and Garnite Plastics Ltd PVC pipes for \$6000. The Albury Water Supply Committee, comprising farmers, organised farm labour to lay out the join pipes, cut and repair fences, and generally supply the labour necessary for the installation. Roger Mahan Ltd, of Geraldine, were the successful tenderers for the installation of the pipes at \$10,332. At the headworks, the dam and filling was installed by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd on a cost-plus basis, and the storage tanks were supplied by McKendry Bros Ltd, Washdyke.

In February 1972, it was reported that a major step forward had been taken with the laying of about sixteen miles of main-line piping from the headworks in a tributary of the Opawa River. On 4th November 1972, the scheme was officially opened by Mr R. L. G. Talbot, M.P., at the Mount Nessing-Wilfred's Road junction, and this was followed by afternoon tea in the Albury Hall.

#### COUNCILLOR JOSEPH ALLAN

At the October local body elections in 1971, Councillor Joseph Allan retired after a marathon 36½ years of service on the Mackenzie County Council, representing the Tekapo Riding. He was first elected in May 1935. Mr Allan took up Bendrose Station in 1920, well known for its high quality merino wool. He was a former chairman of the Pukaki School committee, and high country branch of the Federated Farmers. He was also a Justice of the Peace.

During his term of office, Mr Allan witnessed many highlights: the sealing of the main street in Fairlie in 1935, the completion of the Glen Lyon road in 1936 by unemployed labour, a discussion in 1937 on a proposed hill tunnel at Cave, debates on county amalgamation, the establishment of the Fairlie water supply in 1938, the damming of lakes Pukaki and Tekapo, major snowstorms, the start of the Downlands water supply, and the formation of catchment and rabbit boards. His most notable personal achievement was his instigation and carrying through of a power supply project for the Mackenzie country, which earned him an M.B.E. in recognition of that work. Mr Allan was also a foundation member of the Tekapo Planning Commission.

Mr Allan was presented with a deeply upholstered lounge chair as a token of the councillors' esteem and appreciation of his long service.

## PROPOSED LAKE PUKAKI VILLAGE

*Earth has not anything to show more fair;  
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by  
A sight so touching in its majesty.*

— Wm Wordsworth

It all seemed so straightforward. Under the hydro-electric development proposals for the Upper Waitaki basin, Lake Pukaki was to be raised about 120 feet. Runholders had been sensible about the loss of their farms, provided they were adequately compensated, and another site, with a view more magnificent than ever, would be found for the inundated Pukaki township.

In July 1967, the Waitaki Lakes Committee executive held a meeting at Pukaki under the chairmanship of Mr A. D. Dick, M.P., and examined possible sites for a future village replacing that already established. The meeting was unanimous in the choice of a site recommended by the Lands and Survey Department, which Mr H. W. Fisher described as "a striking site and one which brings you right into the centre of the picture." It was a reserve of 200 acres with a sufficient area containing a northerly outlook facing direct to Mount Cook, the rest of the area having a view of Lake Benmore, directly to the south. Present at the meeting were two Members of Parliament, representatives of three counties, and four Government departments (Lands, Works, Electricity, and Tourism). Mr Dick said it was a momentous decision.

The next one hears of the proposal is in August 1970, when Mackenzie County Council criticised the National Roads Board's indecision on the new alignment of State Highway 8. No further progress could be made with the planning of the new village until a decision had been given.

In May 1971, it was reported that applications for residential and commercial sections at the fifty-acre site at the new Pukaki village had exceeded all expectations. Mr Fisher said that 226 persons or firms were interested in obtaining land in the village. Unfortunately there was only one area of under fifty acres overlooking the lake which could rightly be called "the million dollar view". He said that the Lands and Survey Department plan provided for twelve hotel and commercial sections, forty-five residential sections, three-quarters of an acre for a church area, and a third of an acre for shops.

In August 1971 the council was greatly concerned at the delay in siting the village, and in December, in response to a letter from Mr R. Hosken of Pukaki, reaffirmed its support for the proposed new village, and acknowledged its duty to ensure that Pukaki ratepayers were looked after.

Then, over a year later, in October 1972, when Trans Holdings Ltd indicated that they wanted to build a 200-bed motel-hotel complex, the council asked the Minister of Lands, Mr D. McIntyre, for a hard and fast decision on the resiting of the village. The council appeared enthusiastic at this time. Cr A. C. Beattie said the application had come at a good time, and the chairman, Mr J. L. Austin, could meet the minister and "get down to brass tacks" about the village situation. The consulting engineer said the first thing that had to be done was to get the siting of the village finalised. It was decided that the chairman telephone the minister and ask if he would accept a deputation to finalise the village resiting.

Meanwhile, in December 1972, there was a change of Government with Mr Norman Kirk as Prime Minister. The new Minister of Lands, Mr Matiu Rata, had acknowledged a letter, and stated he would discuss the matter with the Minister of Works, Mr Hugh Watt, and that he would write the council again. In August 1973, the chairman reported that he and the two Tekapo Riding members, Crs M. G. H. Murray and J. A. Cameron, had met Mr Watt in Wellington. Mr Watt had stated that the Lands and Survey Department's report was almost completed and submissions would be made to the Cabinet soon. "The meeting we had with the Minister was one of the best we've had yet," he said.

It was on this note that the proposed siting of the Pukaki township ended at the close of the 1964-1973 decade.

### PROPOSED AORANGI COUNTY COUNCIL

Reporting to the Mackenzie County Council in November 1973, the county chairman, Mr J. L. Austin, said that much thought and planning must be put into the amalgamation of the Geraldine, Levels and Mackenzie counties into one body. He said that when the amalgamation eventuated, all councillors in the three counties must work to make one unit in the shortest possible time to benefit all citizens. He said that, as time passed, the move would prove to be the correct one.

An immediate reaction came from the chairman of the Fairlie County Town Committee, Mr C. A. Gallagher. "If you have got our future at heart, for heaven's sake keep out of Timaru," he said, protesting that the committee had not been invited to join in the discussions. He said he thought that Fairlie would be the loser under the new county scheme, and that Cr A. G. Braddick's suggestion that the centre for the new county should be Fairlie was a valid one.

A draft scheme submitted by the Local Government Commission in Timaru provided that the new County of Aorangi would be administered by a council of fifteen members, five from each of the three uniting counties. However, before the following election in October 1974, there would be twenty-five members, an amalgamation of the three councils as then constituted. The designation of the ridings had yet to be decided.

In December, the Mackenzie County Council decided that it wanted the office of Aorangi County to be within the boundaries of the county and not in Timaru. The chairman of the Levels County Council, Mr M. F. Blakemore, took strong exception to what he termed "veiled threats to the scheme by Mackenzie." Cr B. J. O'Neill had earlier sounded a note of warning that if Timaru city was chosen as the centre of the new county Mackenzie ratepayers would reject the scheme by poll.

In January 1974, a meeting of ratepayers was held at Fairlie. About 150 attended, and it appeared that the majority preferred to retain the Mackenzie County in its present form. Although the meeting was orderly, the county chairman, Mr J. L. Austin, found no support for his strong views in favour of amalgamation. He then explained that 15% of ratepayers on the roll could force a poll. If two-thirds of the ratepayers on the roll voted, a 50-50 vote would force abandonment of amalgamation plans. If fewer than two-thirds voted, a 60% majority would be needed to carry the issue.

The final scheme was promulgated by the commission in April after hearing twenty-two objections, twenty-one from Fairlie county town residents and one from Cave. The returning officer for the Mackenzie County Council, Mr B. J. Dwyer, reported that he had received a petition with 373 valid signatures. It was later reported that there were 509 signatures in all, 440 of which were valid. The number required to force a poll was 226. Polling day was fixed for 29th June, and the poll conducted by postal vote. Mr Austin said that most councillors were in favour of amalgamation, but would be happy to see this important issue decided by the electors themselves.

The result of the poll was decisive. Nearly 90% of the ratepayers cast their votes, 888 against, and 359 in favour of amalgamation. There was more than two to one against the proposal.

Mr Austin said he was disappointed with the result, but surprised at the clear-cut majority. Mr C. A. Gallagher said it was a clear-cut vote of confidence in the Mackenzie County Council and its administration. The chairman of the Geraldine County Council, Mr A. D. Talbot, said that a unique opportunity to create a really big and strong unit of rural local government in South Canterbury had been missed. Mr Blakemore said his first reaction was one of surprise, because he was confident the proposal would be carried.

#### ROADING REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Today the residents of the Mackenzie County are reaping the benefit of good roads which resulted from the roading policies of past councils. The reconstruction works prior to the sealing works listed below were carried out by council staff and plant, and in most cases the total cost would be much more than the sealing work itself. From 1964 to 1973 the following work was let by contract:

- 7th August 1964: School Road. Kerbing and channelling, twenty-two chains. Tender by Hurst and Lambert. £848/2/-.
- 4th December 1964: State Highway 79, approximately three-quarters of a mile. Tender by British Pavements Ltd. £1337/16/8.
- 4th December 1964: Cannington Road seal. Tender by British Pavements Ltd. £1727/3/1.
- 4th December 1964: Denmark Street seal. Tender by British Pavements Ltd. £994.
- 3rd September 1965: Lilybank Road. Upgrading of portion. Tender by Roadways (N.Z.) Ltd, Oamaru. £1958.
- 1st October 1965: Talbot Street. Reseal. Tender by British Pavements Ltd. £427/10/-.
- 1st October 1965: Talbot and Kirke streets. First coat seal. Tender by British Pavements Ltd. £835/9/4.
- 1st October 1965: Fairlie to Monument Road. First coat seal. Tender by British Pavements Ltd. £1379/2/-.
- 1st October 1965: Cave-Pareora road. Second coat seal. Tender by British Pavements Ltd. £4135/7/7.
- 4th February 1966: State Highway 79. Reseal. Tender by British Pavements Ltd. £1902/1/8.

5th August 1966: Lake Tekapo. Kerbing and channelling. Tender by Lakes Construction Co Ltd. £1199/18/-.

9th September 1966: Loop Road (now Pioneer Drive), Tekapo. Tender by R. McKibbin Ltd. £993/1/6.

9th September 1966: Mount Nessing Road seal. Tender by British Pavements Ltd. £1672/17/-.

4th November 1966: Nixons Road. First coat seal. Tender by British Pavements Ltd. £1325/6/8.

4th November 1966: Ayr, Argyle and Buchanan streets. First coat seal. Tender by British Pavements Ltd. £591/14/8.

4th November 1966: Part Gray Street. Second coat seal. Tender by British Pavements Ltd. £479/5/5.

3rd February 1967: Fairlie street. Kerbing and channelling. Tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd. £2150.

(Note: Decimal currency started at this point.)

6th October 1967: A blanket tender of \$22,337.35 by British Pavements Ltd was accepted for sealing of seven miles of roads involving Middle Valley Road, Chamberlain Road, Camp Valley Road, Mount Michael Road, Fairlie streets and Cannington Road.

1st March 1968: Tekapo commercial frontage. Sealing. Tender by British Pavements Ltd. \$1193.40.

4th October 1968: Mount Nessing Road. Sealing. Tender by Burnetts Motors Ltd. \$5180.63.

3rd October 1969: Chamberlain Road. Sealing. Tender by British Pavements Ltd. \$5554.49.

7th November 1969: School Road. Kerbing and channelling. Tender by P. Lambert. \$1761.66.

4th December 1969: Clayton Road. First coat seal. Tender by Burnetts Motors Ltd. \$2713.50.

4th September 1970: Fairlie township kerbing and channelling. Tender by P. Lambert. \$2404.79.

2nd October 1970: Lake Tekapo Village resealing. Tender by Isaac Construction Co. Ltd. \$4091.42.

4th December 1970: Fairlie township, School Road, and Albury township. Sealing. Tender by British Pavements Ltd. \$2006.68.

3rd September 1971: Mount Nessing Road. Sealing. Tender by British Pavements Ltd. \$4877.52.

3rd September 1971: Clayton Road. Sealing. Tender by British Pavements Ltd. \$9193.52.

3rd September 1971: North River bridge deck sealing. Tender by British Pavements Ltd. \$265.62.

3rd September 1971: Allandale Bridge approach sealing. Tender by British Pavements Ltd. \$2109.65.

3rd March 1972: Lake Tekapo Domain access road. Construction and sealing. Tender by Hamilton Cartwright Ltd. \$4329.20.

6th October 1972: Sealing contract 1972-73. (No particulars given.) Tender by British Pavements Ltd. \$16,412.05.

3rd August 1973: The following British Pavements Ltd tenders were accepted:  
Cannington Road, \$5247.66; Mount Nressing Road, \$2319.05; Doon Street,  
\$509.00; Tekapo footpaths, \$502.02; School Road, \$1255.25; Camp Valley  
Road, \$4284.72; Cricklewood Road, \$4328.00; Greig and Alan streets,  
\$1310.40.

#### OTHER CONTRACTS OF INTEREST

1st October 1965: Fairlie township stormwater. J. and S. Contracting Co. Ltd.  
£723/10/-.

9th September 1966: Stevens Culvert. Tender by J. and S. Contracting Co.  
Ltd. £1091/11/8.

3rd November 1972: Tengawai School culvert. Tender by Lakes Construction  
Co. Ltd. \$4660.01.

6th July 1973: 12,000 cubic yards maintenance metal. Tender by Blake Bros  
Ltd. \$14,400.

#### FURTHER BRIDGE BUILDING

Continuing the policy of the past decade, the council built sixteen bridges  
from 1964 to 1973. Here again, the contract price would be for the actual  
building of the bridge, and does not represent the total cost to the council.

##### SNOW RIVER BRIDGE

This bridge on Haldon Road measures 200ft by 12ft. On 4th December  
1964, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £6582/3/5 was accepted.

##### JOLLIE RIVER BRIDGE

This bridge is at the top of Mount Cook Road and measures 240ft by 10ft.  
On 2nd October 1964, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £8304/5/6  
was accepted.

##### RHOBOROUGH BRIDGE (TWIZEL)

This bridge on Rhoborough Downs Road measures 120ft by 12ft. On 4th  
December 1964, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £5479/1/3 was  
accepted.

##### ALLANDALE CREEK BRIDGE

Situated on Tondros Road, this bridge measures 16ft by 12ft. On 4th  
December 1964, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £1925/0/7  
was accepted.

##### ROLLESBY BRIDGE

This bridge is on Rollesby Road and measures 20ft by 12ft. On 9th  
September 1966, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £1800 was  
accepted.

##### McKERCHAR'S BRIDGE

This bridge is also known as the Pareora River bridge on the back Pareora  
Road. Its dimensions are 165ft by 12ft. On 5th August 1966, a tender by  
Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £8388/14/6 was accepted.

##### TROTTER'S BRIDGE

This bridge is on Trotter's Road, and measures 20ft by 12ft. On 3rd  
June 1966, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £2666/7/- was accepted.

#### FRANCES BRIDGE

This bridge, on Haldon Road, measures 40ft by 12ft. On 2nd December 1966, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for £300/9/7 was accepted.

(Note: Decimal currency starts at this point.)

#### HARRIS STREAM BRIDGE

This is on the Glen Lyon Road and measures 60ft by 12ft. On 1st November 1968, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for \$6914.22 was accepted.

#### HEWSON RIVER BRIDGE

This bridge is on Lochaber Road and measures 135ft by 12ft. On 7th November 1969, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for \$15,530.29 was accepted.

#### KEENANS BRIDGE

Situated on Three Springs Road, this bridge measures 20ft by 12ft. On 4th August 1967, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for \$5027.06 was accepted.

#### GRAMPIANS BRIDGE

Situated on Haldon Road, this bridge measures 30ft by 12ft. On 6th October 1967, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for \$7960.37 was accepted.

#### WELLSHOT BRIDGE

This bridge on Nixons Road measures 25ft by 12ft. On 1st May 1970, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for \$3993.04 was accepted.

#### RIBBONWOOD STREAM BRIDGE

Situated in Plantation Road, this bridge measures 75ft by 12ft. On 4th September 1970, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for \$12,456.93 was accepted.

#### GALLENS BRIDGE

Situated in Camp Valley, this bridge measures 20ft by 12ft. On 6th August 1971, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for \$7426.84 was accepted.

#### ALLANDALE BRIDGE

This bridge measures 340ft by 24ft. On 6th February 1970, a contract for test piles was let to R. A. Winsley Ltd for \$895.36. On 6th November 1970, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for \$86,271.83 was accepted. There was no official opening for this bridge. In view of the current economic situation it was thought that the expenditure of time and money was not warranted. "The bridge is important for the people of the district, but an official opening would be costly," said the county chairman, Mr J. L. Austin.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1964

##### SIR BERNARD FERGUSSON'S VISIT

On 16th June 1964 a civic welcome was extended to Sir Bernard and Lady Fergusson in which was incorporated the opening of the high school's assembly hall and manual training block. The welcome took place in the school grounds, and business premises were closed for a limited period.

#### TIMARU HERALD

In July the council congratulated the *Timaru Herald* on its centenary and extended best wishes for the future. The chairman, Mr K. Guy, referred to the newspaper's valuable contribution to the progress and development of South Canterbury during the previous 100 years.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1966

##### MR A. H. IRVING

The resignation of Mr A. H. Irving, the chief fire officer, to take effect from 31st March, was accepted with regret.

##### HEALTH AND BUILDING INSPECTOR

The retiring Timaru city health inspector, Mr A. W. B. Watkinson, was appointed as combined health and building inspector from 16th January 1967.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1967

##### DECIMAL CURRENCY

Decimal currency was introduced on 10th July 1967.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1968

##### POSTAL VOTING

At the local body elections in October, postal voting resulted in 94.5% voting in the Albury Riding, 88.4% in the Fairlie Riding, and 85% in Tekapo Riding. Of 1359 electors entitled to vote, 1226 did so, or 90.2%.

##### SIR ARTHUR PORRITT'S VISIT

The Governor-General, Sir Arthur Porritt, and Lady Porritt visited Fairlie on 7th March 1968. They accepted an invitation from Mr R. L. G. Talbot, M.P., to be present at the unveiling of the monument to the collie dogs at Lake Tekapo. A civic welcome took place in the Fairlie Domain, and business premises closed to allow employees to attend.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1969

##### 1974 COMMONWEALTH GAMES

The council gave financial support to the Commonwealth Games to the extent of a levy of 40 cents per head of population.

##### ENGINEERING SERVICES

In August an agreement for an undefined term was entered into with Messrs Bridges, Milward, Fougere and Finlay as consulting engineers to the council, subject to three months notice on either side.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1970

##### BEVERLEY WAR VETERANS' HOME

The council supported the mayor of Timaru, Mr D. R. Dowell, in his opposition to the closing of Beverley Home and the shifting of the residents to Christchurch.

#### **INFLATION**

In November it was stated that during the previous ten years the council had met an increase of 58% in wages. Increase in general rate revenue was 50%.

#### **SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1971**

##### **COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

On 2nd July a tender by Turton and Miller for \$10,066.70 for alterations and additions to the council chambers was accepted.

#### **SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1972**

##### **RAINCLIFF TRUST BOARD**

The Raincliff Trust Board expressed concern at receiving a rate demand for \$341.56 on its youth camp. It was decided to refund half the county's portion of the rates which were \$204. The refund was \$102.

##### **MOUNT JOHN LEASE**

On the recommendation of its town planners, Davies, Lovell-Smith and Partners, the council decided not to use its power to block a move to vary the Mount John Observatory lease, so that the United States Air Force could lease direct from the Crown the land the observatory stood on. Under the district scheme no subdivision could be made under fifty acres, and the area involved on Mount John was two acres.

##### **EMPLOYEES HONOURED**

Two employees who had been with the council for twenty-five years or more were presented with gold wrist watches. Mr H. R. Welsh, the overseer, had served the county for thirty-seven years, and Mr R. M. Fergusson, a mechanic, for thirty-two years. The council had recently decided to make presentations to employees who had served twenty-five years.

#### **SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1973**

##### **TE HURUHURU**

The Geographic Board approved of the second highest peak in the Hunter Hills, known as Trig K, to be named Te Huruhuru after the Maori chief who had lived in early Waimate. The peak was only just within the Mackenzie County.

##### **LITTERBUGS AT LAKE TEKAPO**

Empty cans, beer bottles, paper plates, and every type of rubbish was profusely strewn around the shores of Lake Tekapo, so that there was hardly a patch of ground left uncluttered, said a letter received by the county council in March. Cr M. G. H. Murray undertook to discuss the matter with the custodian, with a view to placing more rubbish bins in the area.

##### **NATURALISATION CEREMONY**

On 5th October 1973, for the first time in the history of the council, a naturalisation ceremony took place. The new New Zealander was Mr Pieter Herman Schurink, a forty-two year-old Dutch sheep farmer, of Cave. His wife and four sons were with him, and relatives and their children also attended to share in the happy occasion.

# 12

## The Dawn of a New Century

### THE LATEST ON LAKE ALEXANDRINA

*Today our placid lakes serenely rest  
Yet, all so silent, speak with rippling tongues  
Of gay and gladsome forms which thronged their breast  
And gave their solitudes a hundred songs.*

— Hare Hongi

When the Mackenzie County Council assumed responsibility of Lake Alexandrina as part of the Tekapo Domain in November 1963, with the camping ground committee running the camping ground, it appears that little of importance took place until 1971.

In that year hut-holders illegally occupying the legal road were served with notices by the council to remove their huts. The hut-holders strongly resisted this move which was referred to the Minister of Lands, but it was not until September 1972 that the council's action was upheld. There had been a discussion on such matters as refuse disposal, electricity reticulation, and the incorrect siting of buildings. The need for improved planning was acknowledged, and to this end the South Canterbury Acclimatisation Society was to prepare a revised development plan for the reserves under its control. The council engaged the services of its own town planning consultants to ensure orderly development.

In October, permission was granted to the South Canterbury Electric Power Board to build an aerial 11,000-volt line over part of the domain (an area on both sides of the outlet stream) to supply forty-two hut-holders, on condition that reticulation was underground.

In April 1973, the council's consulting engineer, Mr G. R. Milward, reported that installing a sewerage system in the acclimatisation society camp would be completely uneconomic. The water supply would have to be provided first, before any sewerage scheme was put in, and this would cost about \$10,000 for a low-pressure scheme, with no provision for fire-fighting, and \$30,000 for a high-pressure one. There were fifty fishing huts in the village, which would mean a capital loading of \$1500 in the former case (on each hut owner), and \$1900 in the latter. It was therefore very obvious that a sewerage scheme would be completely uneconomic. The "privy pit" was the only feasible type of sanitary arrangement.

In October, Cr M. G. H. Murray reported that new decking, and possibly one extra bearer, were required on the Outlet Creek bridge. The work, estimated to cost \$320, was duly approved, and also that future usage be confined to light traffic only. Cr A. G. Braddick remarked on the unsanitary condition of the rubbish pits. Their closure was agreed to with the stipulation that all rubbish from the area be deposited at the Lake Tekapo Village dump. Appropriate notices to this effect were agreed to.

In April 1974, the acclimatisation society expressed concern at the exclusion of caravans from the domain, and suggested that an area be set aside for short-term caravan users, and the revenue therefrom be used to provide amenities for caravans and day picnickers. The council replied that it was not prepared to have unoccupied caravans parked in prime sites for indefinite periods.

In August, the Lake Alexandrina Camp Committee submitted development proposals and conditions under which camping should be permitted. The council accepted the proposals as a temporary measure, on condition that the committee commenced developments on the opposite (north) side of Outlet Creek. The council undertook to metal the proposed access track in the caravan park, and stipulated that no caravan was to be permitted to occupy a site for more than one month.

On 3rd October 1975, the committee was advised that continuation of camping on the present site would be permitted for 1975/76 and 1976/77 on the understanding that it would forthwith commence development on the northern side of Outlet Creek. The council agreed to accept responsibility for bridge modifications to car and caravan standards, and proceed with the access road metalling and the levelling of the proposed camp site.

In 1978, the extension of electric power to the south end was refused by the Lands and Survey Department, the acclimatisation society agreeing that this matter should be held over until arrangement plans were prepared.

In February 1981, the council appointed a sub-committee comprising Crs B. Scott and D. W. Moyes (Tekapo Riding), Cr D. E. Dann (Twizel Riding), the county chairman and the county clerk to formulate a policy on the future of the Lake Alexandrina reserves. A published research document of over 100 pages, entitled "Lake Alexandrina: 1980 — A Public Discussion Document", had been prepared by the Lands and Survey Department, the Town and Country Planning Division of the Ministry of Works and Development, the Mackenzie County Council and the South Canterbury Acclimatisation Society.

The county clerk said the document could be quite severe on the Mackenzie County Council, if the area was opened up for accommodation purposes. Mr Dwyer, who took part in the preparation of the document, said, "It became very obvious that there would be considerable divergence of opinion over the matter, and it could have serious consequences for the council." The three bodies that took part in the preparation of the study could not agree on some aspects of the future of the reserves.

In July 1981, the sub-committee made its report. They considered that it was important that a management authority "with some teeth" should be

established, with the council having one representative on it. The council could not see how any restrictions on hut ownership and sale could be fairly enforced, and that the status quo should remain.

The town planning consultants, Davies, Lovell-Smith and Partners, produced a plan on 17th March 1982. Cr B. Scott referred to a discussion with the Minister of Lands, the Hon. J. H. Elworthy, who had suggested that the preparation of a management plan could be undertaken by his department. The council would then be in a position to decide whether it would assume administrative responsibility. Mr Elworthy said the plan would be straightforward and uncomplicated. The council agreed to the minister's suggestion.

#### NEW BRIDGES PROGRAMME

In December 1973, the Mackenzie County Council decided to adopt a policy of replacing bridges at the rate of one a year, a definite priority list to be drawn up for the purpose. The consulting engineer, Mr G. R. Milward, submitted a report wherein he stated that a bridging replacement scheme, costing about \$800,000 over the next five years, should be implemented if the council were to keep abreast of traffic requirements and avoid excessive damage during heavy floods. Mr Milward added that from 1950 to 1970, the council's policy of renewals in reinforced concrete resulted in a large number of bridges being brought up to good standard, but lack of funds had caused renewals to taper off since 1970.

Mr Milward presented a list of sixteen bridges which were due for replacement, in order of approximate priority: Allandale Stream, Hamilton Road (40ft, \$25,000); North River, Opuha (280ft, \$160,000); Cliffs Bridge, Pareora River (180ft, \$40,000, half cost as on boundary); Phantom River, Lochaber Road (60ft, \$40,000); Stoneleigh Road, Stoneleigh (40ft, \$25,000); Long Gully Bridge, Opawa Road (40ft, \$25,000); Wilfred Road, upper Opawa River (30ft, \$20,000); Wilfred Road, lower Opawa River (50ft, \$30,000); Tondros Road (40ft, \$25,000); Mount Dalgety Bridge, Waratah Road (100ft, \$60,000); McConnells Bridge, Mount Nessing Road (30ft, \$20,000); Martins Bridge (200ft, possibly \$30,000, boundary, one-third cost); Orari River, Lochaber Road (200ft, approximately \$200,000); Dry Creek, Lochaber Road (40ft, \$25,00); Pioneer Park, Middle Valley Road (40ft, \$25,000); other small structures (\$50,000).

Cr B. J. O'Neill said it appeared that the council would have to raise loans for the new bridges. To aim at replacing one bridge a year was then agreed upon. Under this plan the new North River Bridge was the first to be completed.

An even more ambitious project was submitted to the No. 15 District Roads Council (South and Mid-Canterbury Counties) in April 1974. Two schedules of bridges requiring renewal over the following ten years at an estimated cost of \$1,250,000 were prepared. The first schedule of eighteen bridges, costing an estimated \$962,000, could be financed over a five-year period only if an increased National Roads Board allocation was available. If not, the work would have to be spread over ten years. In all there were thirty bridges in the two schedules. There was also a further schedule showing bridge sites where there were no bridges at present, or where existing bridges were of non-permanent materials. It was pointed out that priorities could alter due

to factors, such as flood damage. Estimates were approximate, and subject to proper engineering surveys. They were based on 1974 costs, with no allowance for inflation.

It had been proposed that for the first schedule, costing \$962,000, the National Roads Board contribute \$672,000, the Mackenzie County Council \$241,000, and other counties \$49,000. For the two schedules, the total amounts respectively would be \$859,200, \$341,800 and \$49,000, making the total of \$1,250,000.

These ambitious proposals were not proceeded with, but nevertheless a steady bridge-building programme has been undertaken.

#### A NEW NORTH RIVER BRIDGE

Saturday, 19th February 1977, was a red letter day when the new Opuha bridge over the South Opuha River, and commonly known as North River, was officially opened. It is on the Clayton Road which provides the only access to Clayton, Sherwood Downs, Lochaber and Blue Mountain. A similar ceremony had taken place over half a century earlier, when Mrs C. J. Talbot cut a tartan ribbon to declare open the bridge that this one was to replace. The bridge was to have been opened by the county chairman, Mr M. G. H. Murray, but as he was in hospital at the time Cr B. J. O'Neill deputised for him. The honour of cutting the ribbon went to Mrs Dorothea Galwey, who was the senior citizen of the Sherwood-Clayton district. Her son, John de B. Galwey, has been a councillor since 1973.

The five-span bridge of reinforced concrete beams was built over a period of fifteen months by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd to the design of the consulting engineers. A tender of \$116,750.63 for the construction was accepted on 5th December 1975. The bridge is described as a 275 feet long single-lane structure, and by far the costliest in the county's history. An interesting sidelight is that it is officially 85 metres long, metric measurements being adopted about this time (85 metres is 278.87 feet). The road approaches were carried out by Welsh Earthmovers Ltd who tendered \$18,761.50 for the job.

The bridge was opened debt free. Over the years, the council had set aside an annual appropriation as a reserve account, no loan moneys were involved, and the National Roads Board approved the project with a favourable five-to-one subsidy amounting to \$150,000. This left the county's share at \$30,000. On 6th August 1976, supplementary items totalling \$49,700 had been approved by the Ministry of Works and Development.

At the opening, the National Roads Board was represented by Mr A. D. Talbot, chairman of the Strathallan County Council, who was a nephew of the late Mr C. J. Talbot, chairman of the Mackenzie County Council at the opening of the former bridge in 1925.

A tender of \$1500 by the Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for the demolition of the old bridge was accepted.

#### FURTHER BRIDGE BUILDING

##### WILFRED'S BRIDGE

This bridge is on Wilfred's Road, crossing the Opawa in the Albury Riding. Its measurements are 15m by 3.6m (50ft by 12ft). A tender by the Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for \$29,169.20 was accepted on 7th September 1979.

#### ALLANDALE STATION BRIDGE

This bridge is on Hamilton Road and measures 16m by 3.6m (53ft by 12ft). In July 1977, a Lakes Construction Co. Ltd tender for \$26,392 was accepted.

#### MOUNT DALGETY BRIDGE

This bridge crosses the Hayter Stream on the road from Albury to Burkes Pass via Waratah Road. It measures 28m by 3.6m (92ft by 12ft). A tender by Husband Construction Co. Ltd for \$62,097 was accepted on 3rd October 1980.

#### TE PUKE ROAD BRIDGE

This bridge crosses Irishmans Stream near Fairlie and measures 16m by 3.6m (53ft by 12ft). On 5th February 1981, a tender by the Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for \$39,810.44 was accepted.

#### TRENTHAM BRIDGE

This bridge is on Trentham Road and measures 17mt by 3.6m (56ft by 12ft). On 7th August 1981, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for \$34,349.58 was accepted.

#### GILLINGHAM'S BRIDGE

This bridge on Nixons Road measures 17m by 3.6m (56ft by 12ft). On 1st October 1982, a tender by Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for \$51,147.50 was accepted.

#### OTHER MAJOR CONTRACTS

From 1972-73 onwards, sealing and resealing contracts were arranged annually as one contract. Here again reconstruction works prior to the carrying out of these contracts would in most cases be carried out by council staff and plant, so that the total cost would be much more than the sealing work itself. The following contracts of a major nature were let during the past decade:

- 4th October 1974: Sealing 1974-75. British Pavements Ltd. \$23,066.26.
- 23rd December 1975: New sealing and resealing works 1975-76. British Pavements Ltd. \$24,999.63.
- 5th November 1976: New sealing and resealing works 1976-77. British Pavements Ltd. \$39,220.62.
- 7th October 1977: Sealing work 1977-78. British Pavements Ltd. \$37,287.24.
- 1st September 1978: Mount Michael Valley Road culverts. Lakes Construction Co. Ltd. \$15,506.88.
- 6th October 1978: Sealing works 1978-79. Burnett Motors Ltd. \$81,685.33.
- 6th October 1978: Kerbing and channelling works 1978-79. Aorangi Concrete Ltd. \$13,459.85.
- 7th December 1979: Sealing works 1979-80. British Pavements Ltd. \$37,262.40.
- 7th December 1979: Kerbing and channelling 1979-80. Whitteker and Goodsir, \$3995.70.
- 3rd October 1980: Sealing works 1980-81. Burnett Engineering Services Ltd. \$44,213.48.
- 3rd October 1980: Kerbing and channelling, Fairlie township. Lakes Construction Co. Ltd. \$7434.26.

6th November 1981: Sealing works. Burnett Construction Services Ltd. \$46,245.81.  
4th December 1981: Clayton Road shape correction. British Pavements Ltd. \$16,437.  
22nd January 1982: State Highway 79 sealing. Burnett Motors Ltd. \$19,042.16.  
3rd December 1982: Sealing and resealing programme in Fairlie, Lake Tekapo and the Clayton Road 1982-83. Pavroc Holdings Ltd. \$46,133.  
3rd December 1982: Shape correction in Clayton Road. Pavroc Holdings Ltd. \$27,379.

## THE MILLION DOLLAR VIEW VILLAGE

*Along the untrodden paths of nature,  
I saw the footprint of an unseen hand.*

— Nonsense couplet

After the enthusiasm of finding a site for the Lake Pukaki village in 1967, and the discussion by the county chairman and Tekapo Riding members with the Hon. Hugh Watt in 1973, one would have expected some progress at an early date towards the establishing of the village. This matter has not been settled yet, and prospects to this end seem remote.

In February 1974, the Lands and Survey Department advised the council that it considered the Pukaki locality a prime one, and the proper planning of a tourist village there a subject of national importance. A planning team had been set up to undertake the planning to the highest attainable standards. The letter assured the council that the planning was actively proceeding, and was being undertaken with an appropriate degree of competence. Mr Milward, the consulting engineer, said that ultimately the responsibility for the village would be the council's. The council should ensure that all plans and specifications were approved.

Meanwhile, in May, several ratepayers were pressing for more service stations in the Pukaki area, and disagreed with Mr S. M. J. Smith, the Ministry of Works project engineer at Twizel, that one garage was sufficient in the construction village. It was contended that a twenty-four-hour seven-days-a-week service was needed where farm vehicles had to be maintained. The county chairman, Mr J. L. Austin, said the council had no jurisdiction over Twizel, but that another garage could be provided as soon as the new Pukaki village was set up. "The sooner we get the new Pukaki village established the better," he said. Cr M. G. H. Murray said the new garage should go into the new village.

Then, in July 1975, the council was assured that the new Pukaki village would eventually come under local body control. "The county will be expected to administer it the same as any other township in the area," said the Assistant Commissioner of Crown Lands, Mr F. C. McMullan, of Christchurch. "At that stage there would be capital investment in providing services for the village, and the question of recovery of capital costs would be a matter for negotiation between the Crown and the county." Members of the Lands and Survey planning team had attended a meeting of the council and outlined the project with the use of a model.



LAKE TEKAPO COMMUNITY COUNCIL, 1980-1983

From Left: Crs. R. C. Rayward, W. A. Apes (Chairman), H. Jonson, H. Hunter-Weston, R. S.  
Muir.

Front: Cr. P. J. Maxwell.

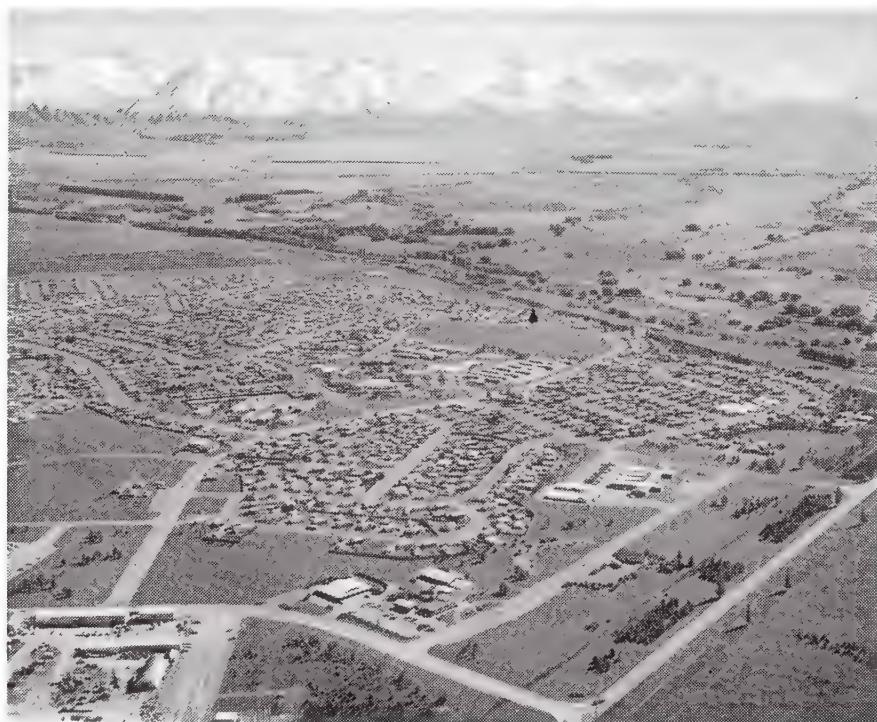


CLAYTON SETTLEMENT BRIDGE, 1955



TWIZEL COMMUNITY COUNCIL, 1983

From Left: Crs. S. Robinson, M. Velenski, M. Hansley, B. Odey, S. Outhwaite, Mr J. Voice (M.W.D.), Mrs M. MacDonald, Mrs G. Brown (Office Clerks), Mrs I. Searle (Secretary), Mr T. Pike (Chairman), Crs H. Tane, M. Swann, W. Orlowski, A. Sargent, Mr D. Dann (Mackenzie County Council), Cr. R. Ramsay.



TWIZEL, 1983

On the motion of the chairman, Mr Murray, seconded by Cr B. L. Chapman, the council approved of the plan in principle, commended the department for the "tremendous job", and asked that the council be kept fully in touch with developments and be given the opportunity to take part in discussions when decisions were made in the planning stages. The council expressed appreciation to the department for allowing the council to display publicly the Pukaki village model in Fairlie over the following two weeks, and Mr Murray suggested that it be displayed in Timaru in order to allow a wide cross-section of the South Canterbury public to view the model and provide the department with a feedback of opinion.

At the annual meeting of the council in November, Mr Murray said that the announcement by the Minister of Lands, the Hon. M. Rata, of the plan for the new village had been the main event of the year in the district. "With a projected eventual population of 3000, Pukaki will play a very important part in the future of this county. We await with great interest final plans and a date for the start of construction," he said.

There was great consternation in June 1977, when the Minister of Tourism, the Hon. H. R. Lapwood, stated that the development of the Lake Pukaki village would not proceed because the Government did not have the finance available for the purpose, at the same time stating that there was no doubt that it was a prime site for development, and private developers may be interested in going it alone. He had not realised that Mount Cook could be easily seen from Twizel, and it would be a waste not to make use of the \$28 million of services remaining after construction work on the power project had been completed. He believed that Pukaki and Twizel should be complementary, with accommodation available at Twizel, and as soon as possible new tourist facilities provided at Pukaki.

The county chairman, Mr B. J. O'Neill, said it was incomprehensible for the Minister of Tourism to suggest that because services were available at a third-rate site such as Twizel, it should be chosen when the "million dollar view" from the Pukaki village was available. He doubted the credibility of the minister, and quoted Mr R. L. G. Talbot as saying the previous January that it was a foregone conclusion that the Pukaki village would be developed. He said it was pious nonsense to suggest that the two statements could be reconciled, and was not prepared to accept that the development of Pukaki would not proceed.

In a report to the annual meeting of the council in November, Mr O'Neill said he was hopeful that there would be some progress in the near future on Lake Pukaki village. Discussions had been held with the Lands and Survey Department and private developers, and information from these discussions had been sent to the Government. In December, Mr O'Neill further intimated that it was most important that the Government produce an attractive and workable proposition for Trans Holdings to develop a hotel at Pukaki. The Government intended to ask the company to submit plans on building stage one of the development which they hoped would fit in to the overall village plan.

The matter was not raised again until May 1979, when the Minister of Lands, the Hon. V. S. Young, stated that every endeavour was being made for the early development of the new village at Pukaki, hinting at the same time that Trans Holdings may forfeit its chance to handle the project. The Com-

missioner of Crown Lands was to get in touch with Trans Holdings, and, depending on the company's reaction, would consider re-advertising for development proposals by interested parties. Mr O'Neill commented that the Mackenzie County Council had been frustrated by a lack of action on the subject, but he hoped that at least the idea had not been scrapped.

On 2nd May 1982, the council received a large number of objections to the draft district scheme incorporating a tourist village at Pukaki. The village, which had first been proposed when the old Pukaki township was dismantled to make way for the raising of the lake, was included in the planned scheme. While some councillors believed that the village would never be developed, the council decided by seven votes to three not to lodge an objection to the village's inclusion in the scheme.

Finally, in September 1982, a news article said that all moves to establish a luxury alpine model village at Lake Pukaki with million-dollar views of Mount Cook had come to nothing so far. Mr O'Neill said that although the council was in favour of a tourist village at Lake Pukaki, no approaches had been made by private enterprise to build hotels, motels, holiday homes, or other tourist outlets there. Successive Governments had given the go-ahead for a Pukaki village, but they handed it over to private enterprise, which never really came up with anything. He said the village, complete with hotels and motels with a few hundred beds, could easily cost \$50m to \$100m on today's construction prices. The opportunity was still there for private enterprise to take up the challenge, and he felt that ultimately there would be a high-rise tourist village built at the lake. It could sleep from 1000 to 1500 people, but like everything else it would have to start on a small scale and gradually build up. It was planned to site Pukaki on the heights above the highway at Lake Pukaki.

#### A PROPOSED COMMUNITY LAKE

On 27th February 1975, the Fairlie Community Council approved of an architect's plan for a lake on the defunct railway land at Fairlie. Before the council was a written objection to the proposal. Mr M. J. Wood submitted his views on the danger to youngsters, and also suggested alternative ways of beautifying the area. Another letter approving of the proposal was received from the Mackenzie Country and Western Carnival Society.

Cr R. E. Anniss stated that it was logical economics to have the lake, instead of costly excavation work to make a rockery. Cr R. S. Buick said he could not see any great hazard of possible drowning. Both councillors quoted other cities and towns with lakes. Cr A. R. Gray thought the size of the lake ought to be reduced.

The landscape architect had quoted that water would not enter nearby properties. In reply to Cr A. G. Braddick, the consulting engineer, Mr J. R. Fougere, said that if correct filling was used the cost of keeping the lake clean would be of no significance. "The water would flow from the top and out the bottom of the lake."

When the matter was discussed at the Mackenzie County Council meeting in March, Cr B. L. Chapman expressed opposition on the grounds that it would be a danger to children, and also on account of construction and maintenance costs. He was supported by Cr J. Murphy, but a motion to the effect that the development plan be amended to provide for the grassing and

planting of the whole area was defeated. Cr Braddick, supporting the idea of a lake, said that when the pond was laid out it would be a real asset to the reserve, and help the beautification of the town. Cr B. J. O'Neill said he could understand some of the fears about a town-centred lake, but noted that it had taken many years to come up with a plan for "a neglected part of Fairlie".

On 4th April the county council supported the community council's desire to hear specific objections to the proposal. Later in the month a deputation consisting of Messrs M. J. Wood, D. B. V. Gabites, C. R. Coles, A. D. Whitehead, R. A. Benson and E. L. Wynn met the community council to oppose the lake proposal. Mr Wynn said he felt a great deal of land was being wasted, and in ten years time, without a lake, much could be done to further utilise the area. He said there was already a shortage of parking space in Fairlie. Mr A. C. Gallagher, chairman of the community council, assured the speaker that ample parking space would be available in the future, and also that the town water supply would not be used for the lake, as another source was available. Mr C. R. Coles said, "In this democratic society, surely the public should have a say. The architect is paid, so why not request another plan omitting the lake?"

Early in May the community council decided not to make a survey of the town regarding the lake proposal, but at a meeting later in the month a letter from Mr M. J. Wood stated that in a recent house-to-house survey 352 persons opposed the lake plan, 43 were in favour, and 40 undecided. "It is obvious that public opinion is against the scheme," said Cr Anniss. Nevertheless, the council reaffirmed its support of the lake reserve proposal.

The plan was finally killed by the Mackenzie County Council on the casting vote of the chairman, Mr M. G. H. Murray. Those in favour were Crs B. J. O'Neill, A. B. Smith, A. G. Braddick and J. R. Simpson, and against were Crs B. L. Chapman, J. Murphy, J. de B. Galwey and D. W. Moyes, together with Mr Murray. It was emphasised that the vote had not been against the plan prepared for the development of the reserve, but merely for the deletion of the lake.

#### DEVELOPING LAKE TEKAPO VILLAGE

What was described as the biggest public ballot of its kind in South Canterbury was held in the New Zealand Electricity Department's hall at Lake Tekapo on 5th March 1976. A Lands and Survey Department subdivision made available ninety-one residential sections at Lake Tekapo. The ballot drew 502 applicants from many parts of New Zealand, and sections ranged in price from \$3000 to \$6000, totalling nearly the half-million dollar mark.

It was estimated that the improvements which would be built on the subdivision in the following two years or so would add something like \$2.5 million to the capital value of the Mackenzie County. Conditions of sale stipulated that a permanent home must be built in one year, and a holiday house within two years.

The subdivision was on rising land behind another built-up area to the east of the Tekapo River, and was fully serviced with underground power and telephone services, and sealed roads. Apart from a few sections, the subdivision had an excellent view of the lake and mountains. Sections ranged in

price: 7 at \$6000, 1 at \$5850, 9 at \$5750, 1 at \$5600, 12 at \$5500, 1 at \$5400, 2 at \$5300, 13 at \$5250, 2 at \$5200, 1 at \$5100, 11 at \$5000, 4 at \$4750, 1 at \$4700, 3 at \$4500, 1 at \$4250, 10 at \$4000, 3 at \$3750, 6 at \$2500 and 1 at \$3000.

During the month of March, building permits to a total value of \$317,588 were issued by the Mackenzie County Council. The largest item was an accommodation building (\$150,000). Dwellings ranged from \$16,800 to \$70,100.

Evidence of the rapid growth of Tekapo as a residential area was forthcoming in June 1978, when a joint meeting of the Mackenzie County Council and the Lake Tekapo Development Commission questioned the desirability of high density housing in a rural area such as Lake Tekapo. The meeting adopted five resolutions which it said would be subject to further consideration and discussion:

- (1) That the zoning of the area of Crown land to the south of the Saleyard Company block be amended from "deferred residential" to "residential".
- (2) That the "travellers' accommodation" zone on the east side of the Tekapo River be relocated to the east of the access road into the Saleyard Company block, and further south from State Highway No. 8.
- (3) That provision be made on the eastern side of the Tekapo River for limited commercial development within the area currently zoned "residential".
- (4) That the "travellers' accommodation" zone on Saleyard Company property be rezoned "residential", and that family type motels be a conditional use in that zone.
- (5) That provision be made for additional deferred residential land to be east of the resited travellers' accommodation zone.

The next logical step to the rapid growth of this region was a move to form a community council. In December 1978, the Mackenzie County Council received a deputation of residents urging the formation of one, and decided to assess the ratepayers' opinion. At their February meeting, on the motion of Cr D. W. Moyes, Tekapo Riding, seconded by Cr A. G. Braddick, Fairlie Community Riding, it was decided to go ahead with the proposal. The county clerk assured Cr B. L. Chapman that there would be no administrative problems. He told Cr A. B. Smith that it would take about three months to set up.

The first election was held on 19th September 1979, those elected being Councillors W. A. Apes, H. Hunter-Weston, P. J. Maxwell, R. S. Muir, R. C. Rayward and Mrs A. A. Steele. Mr Apes was elected chairman.

In August 1981, the Lands and Survey Department advised the Mackenzie County Council that it was prepared to make more land available to the east of the village. The parcels of land the council was after would be capable of providing up to 100 sections. The two riding members, Messrs D. W. Moyes and Bruce Scott, were appointed to meet with the consulting engineer, Mr J. R. Fougere, to bring forward a proposal of how many residential sections should be developed.

The following March it was announced that in July 1982 the first sections of the new subdivision would be offered for sale. The council planned to offer twenty-one of the proposed ninety-one residential sections to be developed east of the township. The county clerk said that future development of the

other seventy sections would depend on the selling of the stage one sections.

In the meantime, in June, the Lake Tekapo Community Council was advised by the county clerk that an allocation of \$57,700 had been made by the Mackenzie County Council for work at Lake Tekapo during the current financial year. He said a further \$5000 had been granted from the domain account. "The share of expenditure this year is well above the rates received from Tekapo," Mr Dwyer explained. The community council resolved, on the motion of Cr Heather Jonson, to set up a committee especially to deal with works matters, and Crs H. Hunter-Weston, R. C. Rayward and Jonson were appointed to it.

In August, fourteen of the twenty-one sections were sold by auction, and another three within the following week, leaving four unsold. The fourteen sections fetched a total of \$299,000, and two of the other sections went for \$13,000 and \$18,000 respectively. The two top prices paid were \$30,250 and \$29,000. The biggest section in the subdivision, 1054 square metres (say, a quarter acre) sold for \$16,000, while the smallest, 590 square metres (just over an eighth of an acre) fetched \$27,000.

On 3rd September 1982 the council accepted a tender of \$175,061.46 by Francis Construction Services Ltd for the Lakeview subdivision. Cr Scott enquired as to the possibility of the work being carried out by county staff, but on receipt of comments by the consulting engineer the idea was not pursued. The county clerk's report on the financial outcome of the subdivision was then considered. It showed development costs at \$327,392 with revenue from section sales totalling \$382,750. Cr Scott considered that the net profit from the sale of the twenty-one sections would be \$42,000. He also said that a further twenty-odd sections could be made available in about eighteen months. (Note: That would be about March 1984.)

#### TEKAPO TOWNSHIP WATER SCHEME

In July 1973, the consulting engineer, Mr G. R. Milward, submitted a report advocating a \$70,000 water scheme for Lake Tekapo township, capable of accommodating 2500 people, or twenty years growth. He said the present reticulation was useless for fire fighting, both for flow and for pressure. The township had organised an efficient fire-fighting unit, but it was very restricted without a proper water supply. The peak population in the summer at that time was 700, but could climb to 1600 within the following five years, and quite possibly it would be 2500 persons in, say, twenty years.

Mr Milward estimated that pipes, pipe laying, backfilling and street repairs would cost about \$44,400, reservoir \$5000, chlorination pumps and building \$6000, and contingencies and engineering costs \$10,000, making a total of \$70,000. Cr M. G. H. Murray said the scheme could not get moving until the Forks River source was ready, and he moved that the report be received.

The matter was brought up again in February 1974, when the council decided to investigate a water scheme for the Tekapo township, stated to cost \$100,000. It was tentatively suggested that the council provide \$60,000, and that overtures be made to the N.Z.E.D. and Lands and Survey Department for a contribution of \$20,000 from each department. The water would be drawn from the Forks River. This decision was made after consideration of a report by its consulting engineers, Milward, Fougere, Finlay and Pole.

On 30th May 1975, the consulting engineer, now Mr J. R. Fougere, reported that the sewerage extensions that were contemplated could exceed \$120,000 in cost on current prices. The current system served 881 people, but existing and future needs could boost the population to be serviced, including temporary residents and holiday-makers, to 2200. This was a fast growing high-country area, and the council decided to ascertain whether the Health Department would subsidise the scheme at \$1 for each \$2 local share.

In September 1976, it was decided to raise a loan of \$100,200 for the new water supply. In October revised estimates put the cost at \$170,000, operating costs at \$2000, with loan servicing at \$11,420 a year. The annual cost per household would be \$58.

In October 1977, concern was expressed that the Tekapo water and sewerage extensions were being held up because of the slow review of the town planning scheme. The county clerk said that the Tekapo works hinged on the review of the scheme plan and zoning, before financing through loans and subsidies could be considered. Figures discussed at the time were \$170,000 for water, and \$188,000 for sewerage extension.

On 3rd March 1978, a tender by Francis Construction Services Ltd for \$39,148 for Tekapo water supply pipeline construction was accepted, and soon after the formalities to raise a loan of \$100,000 were completed. On 6th April 1979, a tender by the Lakes Construction Co. Ltd for \$19,148.72 for public conveniences at Lake Tekapo was accepted.

On 4th August 1979, another financial hurdle was overcome when the council decided to seek a further loan of \$60,000 to complete the water supply reservoir. Tenders for the 250,000-gallon reservoir and pumphouse produced two at \$131,861 and \$93,791 respectively. The estimate of the entire cost of the water supply project had risen from \$170,000 in 1976 to some \$240,000. It was decided to advertise for tenders again. In July 1980, the Health Department approved an additional subsidy of \$43,167 for the Tekapo village water supply.

In May 1980, the county clerk, Mr B. J. Dwyer, submitted a special report showing that high costs could prevent the Mackenzie County Council carrying out further water and sewerage reticulation at Lake Tekapo township. The total annual cost, including the water supply contract in progress, was \$32,164, and at that time there was a net loan indebtedness of \$203,113. The position would be that if the sewerage extension to the area bounded by Pioneer Drive and State Highway 8 were proceeded with a further loan of \$109,000 on current costs would be necessary.

The annual charge on such a loan would be \$15,598 which together with the total annual costs including water supply would be \$47,762. Figures showed an annual shortfall of income amounting to \$24,152, necessitating a rating increase slightly in excess of 100% to enable the services to be financially self supporting.

Great concern was expressed at the Lake Tekapo Community Council in November 1980, when the county clerk revealed that it was the Government's intention to discontinue water and reticulation subsidies as from March 1982. To date the sewerage proposition has been shelved, as has the subdivision of the existing sections in the Pioneer Drive-State Highway 8 area.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF TWIZEL

After the then Minister of Works, the Hon. P. B. Allen, had made it clear in September 1966 where the hydro construction village of Twizel was to be located, steps were taken to develop the township. The Mackenzie County Council hardly came into the picture as all the village services were provided by the Ministry of Works. There was a suggestion at one stage that parts of Twizel might be rateable, as some private residential sections leased to contractors or their employees, shop sites and private industrial sections qualified, but it was pointed out that as no urban services were provided by the council this would be hardship on the owners.

The next move of consequence was made in November 1976 to create a separate riding for Twizel. The county clerk pointed out that this would increase the council membership from nine to ten representatives. The population was approaching the 6000 mark, and this could affect the council in that Twizel interests could nominate two persons to fill the Tekapo Riding seats of the council. This would not be in the interests of the Tekapo Riding or the council as a whole, or in fact Twizel itself.

The chairman, Mr M. G. H. Murray, said he was reluctant to comment as he was a Tekapo Riding member himself, but 60% of the council's workload was centred on the Tekapo Riding, and he felt it could well have three members. It was a question of what was fair, he said, pointing out that at the previous election Twizel nearly put up two candidates for the Tekapo Riding. A Twizel Riding was formed. Mr G. G. Cleland was the first representative from 1977 to 1980, and Mr D. E. Dann since then.

An interesting development took place in August 1977, when the South Canterbury Planning Council overwhelmingly recommended that a design study be undertaken to show if Twizel could be developed as a tourist and recreation area. This was opposed by the Mackenzie and Waitaki counties chairmen, Messrs B. J. O'Neill and J. T. Pringle. Mr O'Neill moved that the whole idea be scrapped, but as he was heavily outvoted, Mr C. R. Hervey, the mayor of Timaru, moved an endorsement of the recommendation to go ahead with the design study. As Waitaki was not officially a member of the council, Mr O'Neill's vote was the only one against it.

At the following county council meeting, members attacked the planning council's decision, even though the full cost of the study was to be met by the Government. Waitaki and Mackenzie had produced a sixty-page document to establish whether a tourist-recreation need existed, and, if so, to identify that need in specific terms, then to determine the ability or otherwise of Twizel to meet that need. The study indicated that Twizel could not.

Over twelve months later, in September 1978, Mr O'Neill said the whole question of the future of Twizel would receive a fair and impartial investigation and decision. Meetings had been held, but at that stage no resolutions or recommendations could be made. There were too many grey and imponderable areas to be sorted out.

The following March, Mr O'Neill attacked the politicians pressing for the retention of Twizel for permanent settlement, by placing economics above sound town and country planning principles. He said they were disregarding

the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act. The council was opposed to the retention of Twizel, a decision based entirely on town and country planning recommendations submitted by the council's own town planning consultants.

The next move was in September 1979, when Cr G. G. Cleland, the Twizel Riding member, asked for a firm decision either to support the retention of Twizel, or let it die. The Twizel Community Council wanted the township retained as a holiday resort. The community council presented a twenty-one page document, "Twizel: to be or not to be", to the county council, and Cr Cleland expected a firm decision to be made there and then. Cr B. L. Chapman said that Twizel had the potential to be developed as a holiday resort for the average New Zealander, and that we should keep our options open and prod the Government into doing something. In the chairman's annual report, Mr O'Neill said that the Mackenzie County Council's decision not to support the retention of Twizel was one of the most controversial decisions ever made by the council, but one it intended to abide by. In November 1980, the new Twizel Riding member, Mr D. E. Dann, unsuccessfully moved to reopen the matter.

In March 1981, Mr Howard Hall, an Australian developer, offered the Mackenzie County Council \$100,000 as an establishment grant if he bought the township, but the council said it was inadequate, an amount of \$850,000 to \$1 million being required. He was told to get a firm reaction from the Government before proceeding with the idea.

In April it was decided that the council would rezone Twizel from rural to residential if the Government came forward with an acceptable proposal for the retention of the township. Mr J. H. Elworthy, M.P. for Waitaki, said the Government was not considering any proposals for the retention of Twizel, apart from a decision on where the remaining hydro-maintenance staff would be located. Later he indicated that he had not written the town off yet, but future proposals should have the support of both the Twizel Community Council and the Mackenzie County Council before they could be submitted to the Commissioner of Works.

#### A VOLTE-FACE

On 29th May 1981, there was a complete change of opinion on the part of the county council, when it was decided to join with the community council in a bid to find an acceptable proposal for the retention of the hydro town. A letter was received from the Minister of Works and Development, Mr W. L. Young, stating that he understood the council's view that the town should not become a financial burden on the county, and although there was no requirement by the Government to retain Twizel, it was not opposed to other moves for its retention. The only dissenter was Cr J. R. Simpson. Cr D. E. Dann said that the suggested relocation at Pukaki would cost millions to establish, and asked who was going to pay for that. He later contended that it would cost \$5 million to shift the operating staff to Omarama.

In August 1981, the council put a proposition to the Minister of Energy, Mr W. F. Birch, based on a township of 430 houses. The council told Mr Birch that the Government could achieve a saving of more than \$3 million if the proposal were adopted. It was envisaged that of the 430 sections to be

retained, sixty be used for Ministry of Energy staff, and ten for other Government departments. It was proposed that the balance of 360 comprise 300 with dwellings, and the remainder be available for purchase. The estimated revenue from the sale of 300 dwellings at \$15,000 each, and the sections at \$2500, would amount to \$4,650,000. The retention proposal provided for the sum to be disbursed as follows: county investment account \$1,200,00, Twizel fund for future capital works, \$400,000 to be retained by the council, and the balance to the Government of \$3,050,000. In September it was reported that a Wellington property developer was interested in buying Twizel as a ski resort.

Over a year later, in September 1982, the council still had not heard from the report submitted to the Minister of Energy, and decided to ask the Minister of Works and Development, the Hon. A. P. D. Friedlander, for a definite answer to the council's proposals. A condition of the proposals was that the permanent electricity maintenance staff for the Upper Waitaki hydro project settle in Twizel, but the Government had decided that the staff should settle at Omarama. In October, Cr D. E. Dann successfully moved that the county request the Government to submit a retention proposal to the county for its consideration. A further motion by Cr B. Scott that services such as a hotel, garage and shop, which were removed from Lake Pukaki, be reinstated at Twizel, was adopted. A letter from Mr Friedlander had stated that the Government had not taken an irreversible decision on the township's future. In November, the Government agreed to review the future of Twizel.

On 3rd December 1982, the council approved in principle a rough zoning for Twizel. Following an appropriate lay-out recommended by the Twizel Community Council, four zones might be necessary, said the council's town planning consultants, Davie, Lovell-Smith and Partners. The first would be a tourist-service zone along the road parallel to the State highway which would allow for hotel, motel, service station and similar uses. A community development zone would cover the central shopping and community facilities. There should be a residential zone rather than having a scattered residential development through the area. A fourth area should be zoned for industry. The consultants had no fixed option on this, although their initial reaction was that an area in the vicinity of the fire station would be appropriate.

#### RAILWAY LAND IN FAIRLIE

Although the Fairlie branch railway line was closed in March 1969, it was some time before definite steps were taken to make use of the land thus left vacant in the Fairlie township. In October 1969, the Mackenzie County Council members expressed serious concern at the delay in settling the issue. Frustration went beyond the township itself. The No. 15 District Roads Council had mentioned that the replacement of the Tengawai one-lane bridge on the Albury-Fairlie highway would not begin until the railway question had been solved. After some discussion, on the motion of Cr H. C. Anderson, it was decided to tell the Minister of Railways (the Hon. J. B. Gordon) that the council was concerned at the delay.

In February 1970, a deputation from the carnival committee and the historical society to the Fairlie County Town Committee sought the retention of railway buildings and land for community use in Fairlie. The county council decided to hold discussions with the New Zealand Railways and the

Lands and Survey Department on the matter. In September the county town committee received advice from the New Zealand Railways Department about the procedure regarding the recovery of rails, sleepers, bridges, replacing of roading and level crossings of the Fairlie branch line. It was agreed that the chairman and county clerk contact the contractors regarding the lifting of the line north of Talbot Street.

The following December the chairman (Mr H. W. Fisher) said he asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands (Mr Mollett) to examine the disposal of old railway land as soon as possible. He was referring to the Timaru to Fairlie branch line. In March 1971, the Fairlie County Town Committee, following a suggestion by Mr C. A. Gallagher, agreed to request an approach to the Ministry of Works, asking that an area of the old railway land opposite the Fairlie cemetery be reserved for a car park.

In May the Mackenzie County Council instructed the town planning consultants to consider the future of the railway land in Fairlie, and produce a blueprint for its future use. It was said that there could be an objection from the National Roads Board if the land were designated commercial, because of an increase in pedestrian traffic across No. 8 State Highway. Part of the area, which included the station part of the platform, tracks and goods shed were required for roading purposes.

Then, in August 1972, a plan involving the removal of the old railway station and re-development of the site was adopted by the county council. The plan, based on town planning consultants' work, was recommended by the town committee which suggested the removal of the station, two unoccupied dwellings, and a third house when it became vacant. In September the county clerk, Mr B. J. Dwyer, reported to the Fairlie County Town Committee that as the result of a meeting with the Lands and Survey Department it was desired that the Mackenzie County Council purchase the railway station building, three railway houses, and the sheds, and acquire the land, all at current market values. Since then the Mackenzie Country and Western Carnival Society had requested a meeting to discuss matters pertaining to the disposal of the property involved.

In July 1973, Mr A. R. Gray sought permission to approach the Lands and Survey Department for the Fairlie Town and Country Club to purchase railway land. Permission was granted "that the Fairlie Town and Country Club be allocated one acre of railway land for its proposed building, and that its offer to maintain the remainder as a reserve to be accepted, provided that some sites at the northern end be reserved for future commercial development; and that the council and town committee meet the District Commissioner of Crown Lands on the site to discuss the proposal." The council in October deferred the matter a month, agreeing that efforts be made to meet Mr G. Mallett on the site to discuss the proposal.

Little of consequence took place until June 1977, when the Mackenzie County Council received a request from the community council for discussions on the development of the land. Correspondence was received from the Ministry of Works and Development, and the Lands and Survey Department regarding the alignment of Gray Street opposite Hamilton Street and the disposal of the railway land. The Lands Department gave the following valuation: residential area (8850 square metres), \$5000; commercial area

(2295 square metres), \$5000. The department stated that in arriving at these figures the district valuer had allowed for development costs, the demand for sections in Fairlie, and the lengthy period likely to dispose of all the sections.

In March 1978, the council deplored the lack of progress, and it was decided to ask Mr R. L. G. Talbot, M.P., to hurry the department along. In estimates presented to the Fairlie Community Council (formerly the County Town Committee), provision was made for railway land development to the gross extent of \$42,237, made up of \$16,750 direct transfer, \$9460 advance from plantation reserve, subsidy \$4364, and \$11,663 from general rates. No provision was made for revenue from the sale of residential sections, and land purchase costs were excluded. Purchase by deferred payment was currently proposed with no deposit or payments during the financial year under review.

#### THE LATE MR M. G. H. MURRAY

Michael George Hendry Murray had not served a complete term of three years as chairman of the Mackenzie County Council when his untimely death at the age of forty-nine occurred on 25th March 1977. Strangely enough, his grandfather, George Murray, who had been chairman from 1933 to 1935, died in office as a councillor in 1943, and his father, Bruce Nalder Murray, who had been elected by the council during the war years to succeed his father, also died in office as a councillor in 1950. He, too, was forty-nine years of age at the time of his passing.

The owner of Wolds Station and a respected Mackenzie County runholder, Mr Murray was held in high regard throughout South Canterbury. Although he had been on the council for just over six years, he quickly made his presence felt, and after three years became chairman. He had been a member of the Tekapo Rabbit Board, latterly the Pest Destruction Board, for twenty-one years, nine of them as chairman. He was chairman of the high country branch of the Federated Farmers in 1957 and 1958, and secretary for the two previous years. He had been a vestryman of St Stephen's Anglican Church for close on twenty-one years, and a warden of the Church of the Good Shepherd for twelve years. He left a wife and a family of three children, John, Sue and Tessa.

#### CIVIL DEFENCE EMERGENCY

Only once has the Mackenzie County Council had occasion to declare a civil defence emergency, and that was on 2nd December 1979 for the Mount Cook National Park as a result of torrential and sustained rain in that locality. The state of emergency was enforced at 10.20 p.m. on the Sunday following consultation between the county clerk, Mr B. J. Dwyer, the Mount Cook National Park chief ranger and the civil defence controller for the area, Mr Barrie Thomas, and Sergeant G. G. Cleland of the Twizel police. After Messrs O'Neill and Dwyer flew over Mount Cook village on the Monday, it was apparent that the emergency was fully justified, and direct contact was made with the southern regional commissioner, Mr W. B. McCallum. Full co-operation was received from Mr McCallum, who immediately arranged for an R.N.Z.A.F. Iroquois helicopter to fly over the area, and to stand by in case of need for evacuation. All communications to Mount Cook village were severed by the storm, and contact depended heavily on the radio telephone of

the Twizel police. The emergency was revoked on Tuesday, 4th December, and Mr O'Neill expressed sincere thanks to Mr G. G. Cleland (both as county councillor and police sergeant), Mr Barrie Thomas, chief ranger, for "doing everything possible, even at the risk of his own life, in ensuring that all possible was organised in case of the need for evacuation, and in lessening the risk of human life." He also thanked the Upper Waitaki hydro project chief engineer, Mr S. M. J. Smith, whose staff readily moved into the area to effect restoration work.

In October 1980, the Mackenzie County Council resolved that the council's civil defence plan be amended to designate the Mount Cook National Park a sub-area for civil defence purposes, the deputy controller to be the chief ranger, and a member of the civil defence committee. Consequential procedures in the event of an emergency were also enacted.

### THE SHORT ARM OF THE LAW

Reading the minutes of the meeting of the Mackenzie County Council for 3rd August 1979, everything sounds so straightforward and innocent. They merely record that the New Zealand Police Department applied for exemption from the side yard requirements of the Tekapo district planning scheme in respect of a car-port to be erected on police department property at Tekapo. On the motion of Cr D. W. Moyes (Tekapo Riding) and Cr A. B. Smith it was resolved that the application be duly approved.

However, there was amusement at the council meeting when it appeared that the New Zealand Police Department had broken some town planning laws. Councillors were discussing the merits of the proposal when Cr Moyes informed the council that the car-port posts were already in place.

"What?" said the county chairman, Mr B. J. O'Neill.

"The posts, they are already in place ready for the roof," Cr Moyes replied.

"Well . . ." replied Mr O'Neill, "I didn't think the police would do a thing like this!"

The laughter that greeted this comment was obviously aimed at Cr G. G. Cleland, who was a police sergeant. It should be said, however, that he represented the Twizel Riding on the council, and not Tekapo.

### FORESTRY RESERVES

*Oh, ye who enter the portals of the Mackenzie to found homes,  
take the word of a child of the misty gorges, and plant forest trees  
for your lives. So shall your mountain facings and river flats  
be preserved to your children's children and for evermore.*

— Inscription on M. J. Burke Memorial

Before it went out of office in 1883, the Mount Cook Road Board set aside an area at Ashwick Flat as a reserve, and when the Mackenzie County Council took over the Crown Lands Office vested ninety-six acres in the county for plantation purposes. By 1890, the whole area had been planted with an assortment of trees, mainly large, but including spruce, pines, with white birch, oak and other trees among them.

In 1922, the freehold of all plantations was granted to the county, with the proviso that the council with the consent of the Governor-General may

exchange any area not suitable for plantation purposes for more suitable land. In 1926 there were 5000 acres of reserve of which 610 had been planted. Ten years later the figure was given as 7350 acres with 10% planted, including 102 acres at Tasman and 82 on the hillside near Cave.

Today there are approximately 6066 acres (2455ha) of plantation reserves of which 540 acres (219ha) have been planted, and the remainder leased. The plantations are Willetts, 306 acres; Long Cutting, 137 acres; Tekapo, 106½ acres; Cave, 70 acres; Strathallan, 96 acres; North River, 50 acres; Pareora, 20 acres; Ashwick, 15½ acres; Edwards Creek, 35 acres; and Pages, 10 acres.

Over the year, revenue from rents and milling has been accumulated in a plantation reserve account which increases substantially each year. Estimated credit balances for the years ended 31st March each year have recently been given at 1982 \$178,255, 1983 \$259,755, and as far ahead as 1987 \$509,355. Legislative authority has been given in recent years enabling the council to use plantation reserves revenue for other purposes. To this end the Mackenzie County Council spent \$40,000 of plantation account money toward the purchase of new plant in 1981, and has earmarked the financing of the centralisation of works depots costing \$220,000 over a period from the same account. A move to retain a minimum of \$50,000 in the account did not find favour with the council in May 1982.

#### RELOCATING WORKS FACILITIES

When the centralisation of the council's services was first decided upon in 1960, it was envisaged that it would be a costly undertaking, and would have to be done gradually. The centralisation of the works and plant in Allandale Road was therefore agreed upon in principle.

Little had been done since then, and when the matter was tackled seriously over twenty years later in October 1981, it was revealed that the cost would be around \$220,000. Agreement in principle was again given, and it was decided to seek further investigations before making a final decision. It was pointed out again that the council had two depots, the other being behind the council chambers in the main street. The county clerk, Mr B. J. Dwyer, said a loan could mean an extra 7.3% rate rise. A loan of \$220,000 for twenty years at 13.5% interest, together with a sinking fund contribution, would mean an annual payment of \$33,770. Over the whole term the cost would be \$614,000.

A change in financial arrangements enabled the council in January 1982 to decide to go ahead with the project at the estimated cost of \$220,000. Due to a recent change in statutes the council was entitled to use funds derived from forestry for work and purchases other than plantation renewal. The county clerk told the council that at the end of the 1982 financial year the plantation reserve account would stand at \$178,255, and at the end of the following year it would have been boosted to \$259,755. At the end of the 1984 year the account would contain \$334,055, and by the end of 1987, provided nothing was withdrawn from the account meantime, it would stand at \$509,000.

The acting chairman, Cr B. L. Chapman, said the work could be done quite comfortably out of plantation revenue, and Cr N. C. Anderson said it was not

good business to accumulate large amounts of moneys in accounts. Cr B. Scott wanted to see the council go ahead with immediate building and the work financed from the plantation account. Contrary views were expressed by Cr C. A. Gallagher, who was disturbed that if it was decided to finance the whole project out of plantation reserves no rating revenue would be used at all. He moved that the project be financed from the reserves account, but that the amount withdrawn be reimbursed at a rate of \$22,200 for the following ten years. Cr Gallagher was supported by Cr J. R. Simpson, chairman of the council's planning committee.

It was decided that the council go ahead with the construction of a large depot shed at a cost of \$150,000 in the 1982-1983 financial year, and the county clerk and consulting engineer later decide if the full programme could be completed in one year. The centralisation also involves the construction of other garages and storage facilities, along with staff facilities such as a cafeteria.

Mr J. de B. Galwey moved an amendment that the project go ahead with funds from the plantation account being used. For the amendment were Crs Galwey, Anderson, Scott, A. B. Smith, D. W. Moyes and the acting chairman. Against were Crs Gallagher and Simpson. Cr B. J. O'Neill was absent through a minor operation he underwent during the week.

#### THE AORANGI UNITED COUNCIL

The original region as proposed by the Local Government Commission covered the complete area from the Rakaia River to Shag Point, and therefore included the whole of the Waitaki County and the Oamaru Borough in North Otago. The Mackenzie County Council was consistently against the formation of any region at all, but recognising that something would eventually be forced upon them, considered new developments as they arose from time to time.

Understandably, the council was in no mood to make up its mind in a hurry, when the matter was raised in August 1977. It deferred any view on the regional scheme until a local bodies meeting called to be held in Ashburton had taken place. The county chairman, Mr B. J. O'Neill, said the council should be non-committal until he and the county clerk, Mr B. J. Dwyer, had attended the Ashburton meeting. His view was supported by Crs A. G. Braddick and J. I. Innes who successfully moved that the matter be deferred.

Reporting on the Ashburton meeting, the chairman said that Ashburton and Oamaru areas expressed opposition to the Aorangi plan. He also said that there had been some reservations among Mackenzie councillors about the need for a region at all. He thought larger areas preferable to mini regions. The council should ensure that the proposed region's mandatory powers — civil defence and planning — should not be expanded to other spheres unless there were strong reasons. The Mackenzie council should also ensure that it had a strong representation on the council.

At the December meeting there was a complete lack of enthusiasm for a regional council. The Government had already stated its intention not to proceed with the Aorangi regional scheme, and in Mr O'Neill's opinion this was viewed with no real concern by Mackenzie residents. If any real concern was currently felt it would be centred on what form any future reorganisation may take. He doubted the benefit of such a region in a rural area, and felt that it would only create a two-tier system of local government.

A regional meeting of sixty local government representatives organised by the South Canterbury Planning Council was held in Timaru on 4th July 1978. The president of the Counties Association, Mr J. M. Somerville, urged local bodies in the South Canterbury and North Otago areas not to get too emotional over the subject of regional government. Regional planning was something that had been talked about for a long time, but only with the establishment of proper regional bodies could it be carried out properly. He said South Canterbury had a very useful regional planning authority, but it was only a voluntary organisation, and lacked statutory power.

The president of the Municipal Association, Mr B. G. C. Elwood, urged representatives to support regional government, adding that it would in no way remove the autonomy of local councils to decide local matters. He claimed that this was the start of a new era in local government.

In April 1979, the council decided that it no longer supported the proposed Aorangi region, and called upon the Local Bodies Commission to establish smaller regions. The council had up to then been a reluctant supporter of regions, councillors preferring that no regions be established. However, after some discussion the council resolved that there was merit in establishing regions where there was common community of interests, and that it now favoured a South Canterbury region based on Timaru.

In November 1979, the Local Government Commission announced a substitute provisional scheme, which excluded the Oamaru Borough and the Waitaki County, but inserted an out-district covering the Waitaki Catchment Commission area to be part of Aorangi for regional planning purposes only. In the following month, the council still doubted whether advantages would accrue from the establishment of any region at all. In accepting this second provisional region, the council was not happy with the new boundaries. The new region included a considerable part of Waitaki County, but without specific representation.

In February 1980, the matter came up once more. This time the council decided to support the Waitaki County in its move to return to the boundaries of the original scheme. The chairman said that Waitaki County Council representatives had visited the Mackenzie County Council, and that a "good frank discussion" was held. However, the Mackenzie council would not lodge a formal objection of its own against the provisional substitute Aorangi scheme.

In October, the council unanimously decided not to support the Waitaki County Council in a bid to have the Waitaki catchment controlled by an inter-regional committee for planning purposes under the Aorangi scheme. It was thought this would mean another tier of local government. The Waitaki County said that it found the out-district proposal as being completely unsuccessful.

In his annual report, the county chairman, Mr B. J. O'Neill, reiterated his doubts that the regional scheme would be of any benefit to the residents of the Mackenzie County. He thought the opposition the council had raised in the past was still valid. However, the council's sympathy would go to the Waitaki County with its most important area for planning, the Waitaki River, becoming an out-district of Aorangi.

In May 1982, the promotion of a Private Member's Bill by the Waitaki County Council for a Waitaki Valley Authority was objected to by the

Mackenzie County chairman. There had been no prior consultation or dialogue with the majority of the members of the Waitaki Lakes Joint Planning Committee. The first that the Mackenzie County had heard of the matter was through the news media. The proposed Waitaki Valley Authority would take in the boundaries of the Waitaki Catchment Commission, which included the Mackenzie basin, plus the Oamaru Borough. Cr J. de B. Galwey was concerned the county would lose the Mackenzie basin if the proposal went ahead.

In June, another idea was mooted for consideration by the Mackenzie County Council. It received a deputation from the Waitaki County comprising the chairman, Mr T. M. F. Taylor, Crs H. J. Bennett, D. A. McLeod and the county clerk, Mr A. E. Budd. The council had placed before it a concept of Waitaki, Mackenzie and Waimate counties combining to form a Waitaki Valley Regional Authority. Mr Taylor said his council favoured the drafting of a Private Member's Bill proposing a Waitaki Valley Authority, as opposed to an out-district plan put forward by the Local Bodies Commission. The Mackenzie County Council made no decision but agreed to discuss the matter further.

However, in August, when it was obvious that, whether they liked it or not, regional or united councils were mandatory and would be set up, Mr O'Neill said that the original Aorangi scheme would best fulfil the planning requirements of the Mackenzie County Council. With boundaries from Shag Point to the Rakaia River, it would get over the anomaly of an out-district for the Waitaki River area.

Finally, in October 1982, the council decided not to support the Waitaki County Council's counter-proposal for the scheme. A letter had been received from Mr Taylor offering an alternative to resolve the out-district problem. Mackenzie sympathised with the problem Waitaki faced, but was not in favour of regional government, supporting the original scheme only because it realised regional government was inevitable.

However, that was not to be. The final scheme approved by the Local Government Commission, to come into force from 1st April 1983, excluded Waitaki County and Oamaru Borough which were included in the North Otago and Coastal Region, but retaining the out-district covering the Waitaki Catchment Commission area as part of the Aorangi region for planning purposes.

The members of the Aorangi United Council appointed by the Mackenzie County Council are Mr B. J. O'Neill and the deputy chairman, Mr B. L. Chapman. The first meeting was held on Wednesday, 18th May 1983. Mr A. C. Houston, chairman of the Strathallan County Council, was elected chairman, with Mrs H. D. L. McIver as deputy chairman. The principal officer is Mr D. E. Pearson, general manager and town clerk of the Timaru City Council.

#### THE FUTURE OF TWIZEL

On Tuesday, 12th April 1983, it was announced that the Government was to offer Twizel township plus a grant of \$150,000 to the Mackenzie County Council. The offer included all assets that the county council wanted to include in its urban zone after the Government had taken those houses and facilities needed to establish permanent electricity workers at Omarama. The grant was the estimated net cost of removing the town after houses and

other facilities had been sold. In a statement, the acting Minister of Works and Development, the Hon. J. H. Elworthy, said, "While the Government is under no legal obligation to support the retention of Twizel, it is well aware of the feeling in the local community for the township to be retained. The county council's action last year to change its district scheme and conditionally zone the area residential also reflected this."

In a later statement the Government indicated that it was prepared to give free of charge to the council:

All roads, reserves and land within the area it has zoned residential.

Up to 293 houses with untreated timbers and up to 47 houses with treated timbers.

Up to 14 shops with a total area of about 2000 square metres.

The fire station, but excluding appliances and equipment.

The library building and ambulance garage excluding vehicles.

The service station, dental surgery and Ministry of Transport office.

The kindergarten and Catholic presbytery.

The tennis courts, swimming pool, skating rink, play centres, sports areas and sports pavilion.

And the gymnasium and trunk services.

If the offer is accepted it will be necessary for Government departments to assess the level of on-going service needed for the community, their staff requirements and any land required will be deducted from the offer.

However, the council has been asked to note that a number of assets within the zone are not available. These assets, which the Government says might remain permanently, include:

The maternity hospital plus two houses, and the police station plus three houses.

The primary and secondary schools plus one house, and the old motel now in the ownership of the Education Department.

The post office and the district public health nurse clinic and residence.

The National Bank, church and Returned Services Association building.

One privately owned dry-cleaning establishment.

Thirty-two privately owned houses.

The hotel, T.A.B. and South Canterbury Electric Power Board showroom and office.

Land upon which these assets are sited is also excluded from the offer. It is also proposed to hand over the remainder of the Crown leases to the county for it to decide on future tenure.

With the exception of the trunk services, the offer is subject to the county indicating its intention to retain the size of the present town zone. If any lesser town is decided upon then the offer will be proportionately scaled down.

The Government intends to restore the areas of Twizel outside the residential zoning to unobtrusive land forms suitable for agriculture.

#### CENTENNIAL COMMUNITY CENTRE

Early in the year, a joint meeting of the Mackenzie County Council and the Fairlie Community Council approved of a centennial community centre to be sited on the Fairlie village green area. Architect's sketch plans had been made public, and the centennial committee had expressed its approval of

the project. The county chairman, Mr B. J. O'Neill, said the proposal was the decision of the people, that there had been a good representation at public meetings, and that the people of the district appeared to want a large project to commemorate the centenary. He said the county had made a great deal of money available for a project to be investigated, and as long as no large influx of ratepayers' money was expended on the construction, the county council was duty bound to help maintain any projects agreed upon.

Mr John Campbell, the centennial committee chairman, had previously said that when the council had discussed the proposals, the committee would seek public support to fund and realise the project.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1974

##### ENGINEER'S LAST MEETING

On 1st March 1974, Mr G. R. Milward, who had served the Mackenzie County Council for twenty-four years as consulting engineer, attended his last council meeting. He was replaced by Mr J. R. Fougere who was welcomed on 5th April by the chairman, Mr J. L. Austin.

##### RURAL HOUSING LOAN, 1974

In September a notice was advertised of a special order to raise a rural housing loan of \$50,000 for the purpose of making advances to farmers in terms of the Rural Housing Act, 1939. The term was twenty-five years, interest not to exceed  $4\frac{3}{4}\%$  per annum.

##### DOCTORS' CLINIC

On 1st November, approval was given to raise a loan of \$60,000 to build a new doctor's residence and surgery at Fairlie. The residence and surgery were separate structures built in Ayr Street. The surgery, large enough to accommodate two doctors in anticipation of future needs, was built on a co-operative basis by local builders, and the residence by Noel Guthrie Ltd.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1975

##### RUATANIWHA CAMPING SITE

In October, the council indicated that it favoured the proposed Ruataniwha site for a camping ground in the Twizel-Pukaki area. This was in anticipation of Ruataniwha being a man-made lake in the Ohau Valley near State Highway 8.

##### HYDATID CONTROL OFFICER

In March Mr Johan G. Wieldraayer was appointed hydatid control officer.

#### SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1977

##### MURRAY PLACE

It was decided that one of the streets in the new Lake Tekapo Crown subdivision be named "Murray Place" in memory of the late Mr M. G. H. Murray, former council chairman.

##### CAVE FIRE COMMITTEE

In June the council made a grant of \$200 to establish a fire unit to service the Cave township and the surrounding district.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1978

### HISTORIC PLACES TRUST

The former road board's dwelling at Burkes Pass, the Boundary Dog Monument at Dog Kennel corner, and the Morrison Memorial stone were designated as places of historic significance.

### ABANDONED LAND

Sixty acres in the Sherwood area was declared by the Magistrate's Court to be abandoned land. The land was in the name of the Colonial Real Property Co. Ltd, but the council was unable to find a record of such a company. The law is that the council must put the property up for sale, and if there is any balance it goes to the Public Trust Office.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1979

### R. L. BANKS FORESTRY COLLECTION

The University of Canterbury offered to donate \$851 for the purchase of books for the Fairlie Library in exchange for the R. L. Banks forestry collection to be used for study and research purposes. The offer was accepted.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1980

### ALUMINIUM SMELTER

On 17th November 1980, the council confirmed a resolution of support for the establishment of an aluminium smelter in the South Canterbury district, as adopted at a meeting of local authority representatives. Referring to a proposed meeting at Temuka, the Timaru Harbour Board was urged to ensure that balanced viewpoints would be presented, by appointing the board's chairman as its representative at the meeting.

### SOUTH ISLAND INDEPENDENCE

"Just rubbish" and "absolute nonsense" was the council's reaction to a letter from the South Island Movement seeking affiliation and support for South Island independence. Its aims were to achieve by democratic means equality of representation for the South Island in Parliament, and also to secure self-government for the South Island.

### CHAIRMAN'S HONORARIUM

In November the chairman's honorarium was fixed at \$4000, the maximum allowable being \$6550. Councillors attending monthly meetings receive \$10, the maximum allowable being \$12. Payments for attending committee meetings remained at \$3 as hitherto.

## SUNDRY BUSINESS: 1982

### LAKE RUATANIWHA

Lake Ruataniwha was officially opened on April 24/25, 1982.

## APPENDIX 1

### MEMBERS OF MOUNT COOK ROAD BOARD

from 1864 to 1883

* Gladstone, Henry John	1864
Hay, John	1864
Parkerson, Burrell	1864-1865
Ford, John Tucker	1864-1866
Teschemaker, Frederick William	1864-1867
Parkerson, John Woods	1864-1867
Clowes, Thomas Arthur	1864-1871
* Sheath, Isaac Brentnall	1865
Maude, Edward H.	1865-1866
Ensor, Charles	1865-1872
Matson, Alfred Kingsford	1866-1872
Parkerson, William	1867-1868
Smith, William Cunningham	1868-1874
Kimbell, Frederick J.	1868-1878
Saunders, William	1871-1873
Brown, J. A.	1872-1874
Gray, Melville J.	1872-1876
Dennistoun, George James	1874-1876
Ostler, William H.	1876-1877
Gillingham, Stephen England	1876-1878
Spalding, Alexander	1876-1880
McGregor, John	1876-1883
Macfarlane, Dugald	1875-1876, 1877-1878
Raine, John Hunter	1878-1883
Rutherford, John Scott	1872-1875, 1878-1883
Cooper, Thornhill	1880
Smith, Alexander Bruce	1874-1876, 1878-1880, 1880-1883
Goodwin, John E.	1881-1882
Struthers, Henry	1882-1883
Chapman, Ernest Arthur	1883
Milne, James Imlay	1883
Rutherford, Robert	1883

\* These two gentlemen resigned at the first meeting after being elected. For a short time Sheath represented Mount Cook on the Provincial Council, but Gladstone, who was a cousin of the famous British Prime Minister, took no interest in politics.

J. S. Rutherford, J. McGregor, E. A. Chapman, J. I. Milne and R. Rutherford were in office when the board was abolished on 3rd October 1883, the latter three having served since the previous June.

## MOUNT COOK ROAD BOARD CHAIRMEN

Teschemaker, Frederick William	1864-1867
Matson, Alfred Kingsford	1867-1868
Clowes, Thomas Arthur	1868-1871
Ensor, Charles	1871-1872
Smith, William Cunningham	1872-1874
Kimbell, Frederick John	1874-1878
Smith, Alexander Bruce	1878-1880
Raine, John Hunter	1880-1883
McGregor, John	1883

According to William Vance, Kimbell, who was also known as Dr F. J. Kimbell, was trained as a medical missionary, but as his health demanded a more congenial climate, he came to New Zealand. He travelled to give free medical aid to the sick, and was never known to send an account for his services. The Medical Council can find no record of his name in its registers.

## GERALDINE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Mount Cook Riding Representatives

Russell, Phillip H.	1877
Ostler, William H.	1878-1879
Clulee, George Frederick	1879-1883

## MEMBERS OF OPUHA ROAD BOARD

Dixon, Richard Arthur	1911-1912
Macdonald, Ernest	1911-1912
Harris, E.	1911-1912
Hamilton, George I.	1911-1912

*Chairman:* Richard Arthur Dixon

*Engineer and Clerk:* Robert Lindsay Banks

## MACKENZIE COUNTY COUNCILLORS

<i>Councillor</i>	<i>Riding</i>	<i>Years in Office</i>
Richardson, Edward (Junior)	Fairlie	1883-1884
Struthers, Henry	Fairlie	1883-1885
Duncan, James	Tekapo	1883-1886
Gray, Melville J.	Fairlie	1883-1886
Rutherford, John Scott	Fairlie	1883-1887
McGregor, John	Tekapo	1883-1893
Cowan, Andrew	Tekapo	1883-1892
Milne, James Imlay	Fairlie	1884-1893
Hayter, (Captain) Francis	Albury	1886-1891
Dickson, Samuel Rigerson	Albury	1887-1893
Saunders, William	Albury	1887-1890
Rutherford, Robert	Albury	1887-1890, 1891-1893

MACKENZIE COUNTY COUNCILLORS	(continued)
Alves, George	Tekapo 1890-1893
Hope, Arthur	Tekapo 1892-1897
Hunter, George	Albury (7 months) 1893
McGregor, John	Fairlie 1893-1896
Ross, John	Fairlie 1893-1896
McLeod, Malcolm	Tekapo 1893-1899
Richardson, Edward (Junior)	Albury 1893-1896
Rutherford, John Scott	Albury 1893-1902
McLean, Alan Hugh	Fairlie 1896-1901
Wreford, William	Albury 1896-1906
Gillingham, Frances Robert	Fairlie 1885-1893, 1896-1917
Guthrie, Robert	Tekapo 1897-1899
Thomas, Alfred Rittson	Tekapo 1899-1900
Tripp, John Mowbray Howard	Tekapo 1899-1900
Burnett, Andrew	Tekapo 1900-1902
Hamilton, William Fielden	Tekapo 1900-1902
Pringle, James Alexander	Tekapo 1902-1905
Rutherford, John Scott	Tekapo 1902-1911
Guthrie, Robert	Fairlie 1902-1911
Irving, Richard	Albury 1902-1923
Black, Walter	Fairlie 1905-1908, 1917-1923
Schlaepfer, Emil	Tekapo 1905-1911
Stewart, Donald	Albury 1905-1911
Smith, William Tasman	Cave 1906-1911
Smith, Alexander Searle	Fairlie 1908-1911
Burnett, Thomas David	Tekapo 1911-1917
Grant, James William	Tekapo 1911-1917
Leitch, Robert	Fairlie 1911-1920
Smith, William Tasman	Albury 1911-1920, 1927-1933
Macdonald, Ernest	Opuha 1912-1923
Dixon, Richard Arthur	Opuha 1912-1913
McGregor, Lewis John	Opuha 1913-1923
McLean, James	Tekapo 1917-1923
Murray, George	Tekapo 1917-1923, 1932-1943
Moffatt, John	Albury 1920-1927
Hope, Owen Morley	Tekapo 1920-1923
Talbot, Charles John	Fairlie 1920-1942
Saunders, Eustace	Fairlie 1923-1924
Hope, Henry Norman	Tekapo 1923-1926
Page, John Joseph	Tekapo 1923-1929
McCort, James	Albury 1923-1930
Buckley, Frederick Henry	Opuha 1923-1930
Campbell, Alexander Finlay	Opuha 1923-1938
Manaton, Harry Sydney Philpot	Fairlie 1924-1929
Seay, Thomas John	Tekapo 1926-1932
Scott, William	Fairlie 1929-1935, 1938-1942
Carter, Francis John	Opuha 1930-1935
Fisher, Harold H.	Albury 1930-1935

MACKENZIE COUNTY COUNCILLORS

(continued)

Parker, Charles Algernon	Tekapo	1932-1935
Fraser, Donald	Albury	1933-1935
Neilson, Peter Edward	Fairlie	1935-1938
Davison, William Roy	Albury	1935-1941
Kidd, Peter	Albury	1935-1944
Mackenzie, Alister Bain	Opuha	1935-1953
Allan, Joseph	Tekapo	1935-1971
Kirke, Charles Vere	Opuha	1938-1959
McKerchar, John Laidlaw	Albury	1941-1950
Keenan, Patrick James	Fairlie	1942-1953
Trotter, William Brown	Fairlie	1942-1962
Murray, Bruce Nalder	Tekapo	1943-1950
Besley, Thomas Egbert	Albury	1944-1947
Guy, Kenneth	Albury	1947-1956, 1959-1962
Mackintosh, William Alexander	Tekapo	1950-1953
Simpson, William	Albury	1950-1962
Scott, John	Tekapo	1950-1970
Sandall, John Francis	Fairlie	1953-1954
O'Neill, James Phillip	Opuha	1953-1962
Mackintosh, William Alexander	Fairlie	1954-1959
O'Neill, John	Albury	1956-1962
Lundie, William John	Opuha	1959-1960
Rapley, Roy Murray	Fairlie	1959-1968
Carter, Percy Francis	Opuha	1960-1971
Jones, George Edward	Fairlie	1962-1968
Fisher, Harold Windeyer	Albury	1962-1971
O'Neill, Bernard James	Opuha	1962-
McKerchar, Alister Leith	Albury	1965-1968
Anderson, Henry Carmichael	Fairlie	1968-1971
Austin, James Lowry	Albury	1968-1974
Coles, Carl Richard	Fairlie	1968-1974
Murray, Michael George Hendry	Tekapo	1970-1977
Beattie, Alan Colin	Opuha	1971-1973
Cameron, John Arthur Preston	Tekapo	1971-1974
Braddick, Albert George	Fairlie	1971-1974
Smith, Allan Beattie	Albury	1971-
Galwey, John de Burgh	Opuha	1973-
Braddick, Albert George	F.C.R.	1974-1980
Murphy, John	Fairlie	1974-1980
Moyes, David Ward	Tekapo	1974-
Simpson, John Robert	Albury	1974-
Chapman, Bruce Lindsay	Fairlie	1974-
Innes, James Ian	Tekapo	1977-1980
Cleland Graeme George	Twizel	1977-1980
Dann, Dennis Edward	Twizel	1980-
Gallagher, Charles Anthony	F.C.R.	1980-
Scott, Bruce	Tekapo	1980-
Anderson, Neil Carmichael	Fairlie	1980-

## MACKENZIE COUNTY COUNCIL CHAIRMEN

McGregor, John	1883-1891
Milne, James Imlay	1891-1893
McGregor, John	1893-1894
Richardson, Edward (Junior)	1894-1896
Gillingham, Francis Robert	1896-1917
Macdonald, Ernest	1917-1923
Talbot, Charles John	1923-1933
Murray, George	1933-1935
Talbot, Charles John	1935-1937
Davison, William Roy	1937-1939
Scott, William	1939-1942
Kirke, Charles Vere	1942-1959
Trotter, William Brown	1959-1961
Guy, Kenneth	1961-1965
Fisher, Harold Windeyer	1965-1971
Austin, James Lowry	1971-1974
Murray, Michael George Hendry	1974-1977
O'Neill, Bernard James	1977-

## ENGINEERS AND CLERKS

(Road Board and Council)

Williamson, William	consulting engineer	1864-1870
Babington, George Matthew	consulting engineer	1870-1874
Cooke, George	clerk-overseer	1872-1875
Clulee, George Frederick	clerk-overseer	1875-1879
Marchant, Frederick William	clerk-engineer	1879-1885
Cochrane, James	clerk-overseer	1885-1889
Banks, Robert Lindsay	clerk-engineer	1889-1929
Jeune, James Frederick Dudley	clerk-engineer	1929-1945
Moorhouse, Terence	clerk-engineer	1945-1950
Somers, James	county clerk	1950-1959
Perrin, Brian William	county clerk	1959-1963
Dwyer, Brian John	county clerk	1963-

From 1950, the council have employed consulting engineers, originally Messrs Bridges and Milward, but with changes in the partnership, now Milward, Fougere, Finlay and Lobb. From 1950 to 1974, Mr G. R. Milward represented the firm, and since 31st March 1974, Mr J. R. Fougere.

## FAIRLIE COUNTY TOWN COMMITTEE

(Fairlie Community Council from 1975)

O'Brien, Terrence M.	1956-1957
Harris, William K.	1956-1959
Tubb, Kenneth C.	1956-1959
Pinkerton, Alfred Andrew	1956-1962
Gallen, Patrick Bede	1956-1965
Crichton, Bertha L. C. (Mrs)	1956-1968
Herlund, Arthur A.	1957-1962
Wall, William Verdon	1959-1962
Barwood, Alfred William	1959-1971
Neill, Colin John	1962-1965
Isitt, John Claude	1962-1968
Shanks, Harold Gladstone	1965-1971
Gilchrist, James Alexander	1965-1968
Macdonald, Ellen Mary Teresa (Miss)	1968-1971
Grundy, Elaine Margaret (Mrs)	1968-1974
Gallagher, Charles Anthony	1968-1977
Scott, Gary David	1971-1973
Gray, Alexander Robert	1971-1980
Anniss, Robert Edward	1971-
O'Connor, John Thomas	1973-1974
Buick, Ross Stewart	1974-1980
Braddick, Albert George	1974-1982
Harris, Samuel Robert	1977-
Shaw, Judith Frances (Mrs)	1977-
Wood, Maurice John	1977-
Carter, Percy Francis	1980-
Crampton, Reginald Roy	1980-
Clarke, Elizabeth (Mrs)	1982-

*Appointed by County Council:*

Mackintosh, William Alexander	1956-1962
Rapley, Roy Murray	1959-1968
Jones, George Edward	1962-1968
Coles, Carl Richard	1968-1974
Anderson, Henry Carmichael	1968-1971
Braddick, Albert George	1971-1974

*Chairmen:*

Mackintosh, William Alexander	1956-1959
Pinkerton, Alfred Andrew	1959-1962
Barwood, Alfred William	1962-1968
Gallagher, Charles Anthony	1968-1977
Anniss, Robert Edward	1977-

### LAKE TEKAPO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Steele, Alison Anne (Mrs)	1979-1980
Apes, William Alan	1979-
Hunter-Weston, Hugh	1979-
Maxwell, Peter Joseph	1979-
Muir, Robin Stewart	1979-
Rayward, Richard Carrell	1979-
Johnson, Heather Ann (Ms)	1980-

*Chairman:* Mr W. A. Apes

### LIBRARIANS

West, Mrs M. L.	1914-1945
Woods, Miss L. C.	1945-1946
Cook, Mrs D. J.	1946-1949
Elms, Mrs R.	1949-1962
Rogers, Mrs M. E.	1962-1977
Roche, Miss S. H.	1977-1980
Ward, Mrs D.	1980-

### TIMARU HIGH SCHOOL BOARD

(Members appointed by Mackenzie County Council)

Gillingham, Sandham	1886-1894
Gray, Melville J.	1894-1897
Smith, Francis Henry	1897-1902
Hamilton, George I.	1902-1903
Gillingham, Robert	1903-1910
Guthrie, Robert	1910-1912
Macdonald, Ernest	1912-1914
Macauley, James	1914-1918
McGregor, Lewis John	1918-1929
Scott, William	1929-1942
Keenan, Patrick James	1942-1948
Guy, Kenneth	1948-1949
McKerchar, John Lindsay	1949-1964
Malthus, Rex	1964-1969
McKerchar, Alister Leith	1969-1971
Wreford, Norman S.	1971-1974
Dobson, Judith (Mrs)	1974-1977
Malthus, John	1977-1979

Direct representation ceased on 31st July 1979.

### SOUTH CANTERBURY CATCHMENT BOARD

Jeune, James Frederick Dudley	1944-1945
Kirke, Charles Vere	1945-1947
Trotter, William Brown	1947-1949
Beattie, Robert Edwin Haldon	1949-1956
Taylor, Reginald Robert	1956-1960
Taylor, Sidney David (ch'man 1965-1972)	1960-1972
Rayne, Peter Alexander	1972-

### TIMARU HARBOUR BOARD MEMBERS

Russell, Phillip H.	1877
Acton, Edward	1877 1881
Teschemaker, Thomas	1881-1883
Wilson, James	1883-1893
Rutherford, Robert	(11 months) 1893
Wilson, James	1893-1899
Goodwin, John Eden	1900-1907
Smith, Francis Henry	1907-1909
Goodwin, John Eden	1909-1911
Rutherford, John Scott	1911-1924
Campbell, Alexander Finlay	1924-1946
McCort, James	1926-1932
Smillie, John H.	1932-1935
Kidd, David Campbell	1935-1938
Davison, William Roy	1938-1941
Kid, Peter	1941-1954
Mackenzie, Alistair Bain	1946-1950
O'Neill, James Phillip	1950-1953
Gillingham, Stephen Kennaway	1953-1965
Kirke, Mervyn John	1965-1971
Kidd, Peter (Junior)	1954-

### SOUTH CANTERBURY HOSPITAL BOARD

Clulee, George Frederick	1886-1887
Lovegrove, Dr James Francis	1887-1889
Hogg, Dr Richard Bowen	1889-1890
Hayter, (Captain) Francis	1890-1891
Thomas, Dr Charles Ernest	1891
Gillingham, Francis Robert (Chairman 1909-1920)	1891-1920
Black, Walter	1920-1923
Macdonald, Ernest (Chairman 1927-1950)	1923-1950
Foden, Henry Thomas	1950-1963
Smith, Walter Ralfe	1963-1970
Jones, Amy (Mrs)	1970-

### SOUTH CANTERBURY ELECTRIC POWER BOARD

Macdonald, Ernest	1922-1924
Talbot, Charles John	1924-1932
Scott, William	1932-1935
Talbot, Charles John	1935-1938
Scott, William	1938-1942
Crampton, Thomas Benjamin	1942-1946
Carlton, Hector	1946-1964
Gallagher, Charles Anthony	1964-

(John William Simpson was an additional member  
1970-1971 at the time of the merger)

## APPENDIX II

### FAIRLIE STAR'S ATTACK UPON TIMARU HERALD

The following is the full text of an article, published presumably in the *Fairlie Star* in November 1898, viciously attacking the *Timaru Herald*.

#### A PRESS SCANDAL

#### THE TIMARU HERALD AND ITS PRESS TICKET

#### THE MACKENZIE COUNTY COUNCIL AT THE MERCY OF A PRESS MONOPOLIST

#### A FREE LUNCH FOR REPORTER AND MONETARY GRANT-IN-AID

#### AN ILLEGAL PAYMENT

#### AN INVESTIGATION DEMANDED

#### SATAN REPROVING SIN

Some years ago the proprietor of the *Timaru Herald* studiously neglected to report the proceedings of the Mackenzie County Council. This studied neglect was unfavourably commented on by the ratepayers. They very naturally expected the paper which served the County in those days to place them in possession of reports of their representatives' doings in the County Council. The proprietor of the *Timaru Herald* was only mindful of the advertising and printing flowing from that body. He drew the line at despatching a reporter to Fairlie at his own expense. The non-appearance of the Council's reports excited widespread discontent and indignation on the part of the ratepayers. In public meetings assembled they recommended the Council to guarantee railway fare and lunch for the services of a reporter if the parsimonious proprietor of the *Herald* would agree to place one at the disposal of the Council. This silver bait had the desired effect, and for years the Council's meetings have been reported, for which the Council has been called upon to pay the proprietor of the *Timaru Herald* first-class return railway fare, together with luncheon for his reporter. Fortunately for the credit of the Press of this colony, the *Timaru Herald* is the only paper that has practised such meanness upon a liberal and generous section of its readers. It is clearly the bounden duty of every newspaper proprietor claiming the smallest pretensions to respectability and a desire to make their papers efficient exponents of public opinion, to publish faithful and complete reports of the proceedings of all public bodies. The *Timaru Herald* of today is merely a skeleton of the vigorous and ably-written journal when the gifted Edward Wakefield occupied the editorial chair. The fact that a proprietor could descend to the petty and

contemptible device of exacting a charge for taking a report of a Council's meeting once a month should beget the condemnation of every right-thinking man. To our mind the charge made by the proprietor of the *Herald* and paid for by the Council hitherto placed at his mercy, has been far from a legitimate one. We will explain: The proprietor of the *Timaru Herald*, in common with most newspaper proprietors in this colony, receives a yearly railway ticket, which entitles any member of the reporting staff to travel over the railways when engaged on reporting work. The ticket is granted at a nominal sum. Although the proprietor of the *Timaru Herald* has enjoyed this privilege at the hands of a Government which his paper has unceasingly condemned for its corrupt administration, he has religiously charged a first-class railway ticket for his reporter, thereby netting a handsome profit out of his annual railway ticket. In short, the accommodating Mackenzie County Council has provided the *Timaru Herald* with nearly sufficient funds to purchase an annual railway ticket for the convenience of the *Herald's* literary staff all the year round, the ticket in question being only used once a month in the interest of the Council. We are of opinion that the expenditure in question is wholly illegal, and that the Government Auditor should refuse to certify to same. The Council, acting under the direction of its masters — the ratepayers — are in no way to blame. They had either to comply with the *Herald's* terms or submit to their proceedings being ignored by a neglectful press. Now that this revelation has been made, it is incumbent on the Council to set up a committee of enquiry into the truth, or otherwise, of our allegation, and if found to be true, to call upon the proprietor of the journal in question to disgorge the moneys which he has been drawing for a considerable period from the coffers of the Council, under the assumption that he was incurring an expenditure for the transport of his reporter from Timaru to Fairlie. The charge for lunch is only in keeping with the railway ticket subterfuge. Now that an independent press has torn the mask from the *Herald's* face and exposed the press dishonesty in all its nakedness, we trust that the Council will do its duty by immediately withdrawing this alluring bait. The *Herald*, like all other papers, in the presence of opposition, will find it incumbent to despatch a reporter, free of charge, to report the proceedings of all public bodies, otherwise the paper would soon be dropped. What will the Minister of Railways have to say to this?

## APPENDIX III

### A RETURNING OFFICER'S DAY'S WORK

Among the papers received from an outlying polling place by the returning officer for the Mackenzie County (1893) was the following diary of a "local elections" returning officer.

9 a.m. Poll opened sharp to the minute. Excellent! Polling booth situated 40 miles from everywhere; built in a style of architecture unknown to any but the heather Chinee, or to, as our eminent legislators would have it, the "Social Pest." Outlook from booth, splendid. A glorious view of Mount Cook could be had were it not that an insignificant tussock hill shuts it out. A grand chain of snow-clad peaks might also be seen if the aforesaid tussock hill were somewhere else. However, we know the hills are there, because the natives say so. By the bye, where are the natives?

10 a.m. Hurrah! Here comes a native, and to vote, too! This Returning Officer's billet is a jolly good invention. Great Scott! here's another voter. Didn't I say the billet was no sinecure? As I said before, the booth is 40 miles from everywhere. Well, I left everywhere yesterday, and Je-rusalem! Wasn't I stiff when I got here. But if these natives don't muster too strong I shall be able to get a bit of a loaf. I didn't pass a single pub for about 25 miles, and wasn't I dry.

11 a.m. No more voters turned up yet! But I mustn't get impatient, they can't ALL come at once, and besides, what with getting the last voter's papers fixed up and reading a story or two, and filling my pipe once or twice, I have really had hardly a minute to spare.

12, noon. Here's another coming down the hill! No, after all it's only a tree — well so much the better. I do feel a bit fagged, and when you come to think of it, it is really rather considerate of them not coming too fast. I should like to slip out and get a bite of something to eat, but the local government doesn't believe in returning officers having anything to eat, as I am supposed to stay in the booth till it closes, and this hour, 12 to 1, is the busiest.

1 p.m. Four hours gone and only two voters. Where the dickens can they all be? I suppose they can't leave their work yet, but between you and me and the booth, it's beginning to get a trifle slow. The "busiest hour" didn't come to much.

2 p.m. I am still here, and so are the mountains and the booth, but where are the voters? After the "rush" in the early part of the day, I thought I was in for a busy time. I think I'll go to sleep.

3 p.m. Yes? Did anyone call me? Oh! tea! I could go a cup of tea. Of course a returning officer when on duty mustn't drink anything stronger, and such tea as this beats the nectar of the gods, and cake too! I'm in luck. Oh! shade of Columbus, three more weary hours to wait, and still no sign of these voters. What a fool they must think me, and yet somehow I think it is the other way round! Where's my pipe?

4 p.m. Good Heavens! What's that? It must be, yet it is, another voter! Well, everything comes to him who waits, and I guess I've waited. The ballot box is getting frightfully heavy, I wonder if I shall be able to get all the papers in. Three votes in seven hours! What is the world coming to? Surely I must have missed some while I was asleep. But there is only a small hole in the roof and another in the wall, besides the door, and I don't think even the voters could get through them, and besides, I should have been sure to wake, my nerves are so excited!

5 p.m. I have come to the conclusion, not, I am sorry so say, of my duties, but nevertheless a conclusion, and that is, that a returning officer's billet is a mighty slow one. What a pity it is that I am not a candidate for the general election being questioned. I would promise anything at the present moment, from advocating the cutting up of the Timaru shingle into small farms down to the lighting of the Mackenzie country by electricity. Oh my country, what an opportunity has been lost to you! By George, only ten minutes more, and still only three voters polled. Now comes the excitement, namely, whether the rest of them will be in time! Five minutes gone! Look sharp voters, I am very strict in my duties. Ah! I see another! He's coming up the road eyes out. Four minutes more. Go it old calico tails, 2 to 1 on the (oh! by the bye, a returning officer mustn't bet!). Three minutes — he can't do it. St. Christopher! This is more exciting than a Timaru trotting meeting. Two minutes Why he seems as far off as ever. Where's your whip? One minute. Ah now she feels it. What a spurt. By Jove he's a game 'un. Last lap, stick to it — he's done — no, he's coming again. But hark! one, two, three, four, five, six o'clock. Poll's closed. Now where's this game rider? Well — if it isn't another tree! And here have I been shouting myself hoarse — well, I'm blowed if I don't have a jolly good drink when I do get back to the land of pubs, just to make up for it. I think the next time I go out on a job like this I'll drive up on a brewer's wagon.

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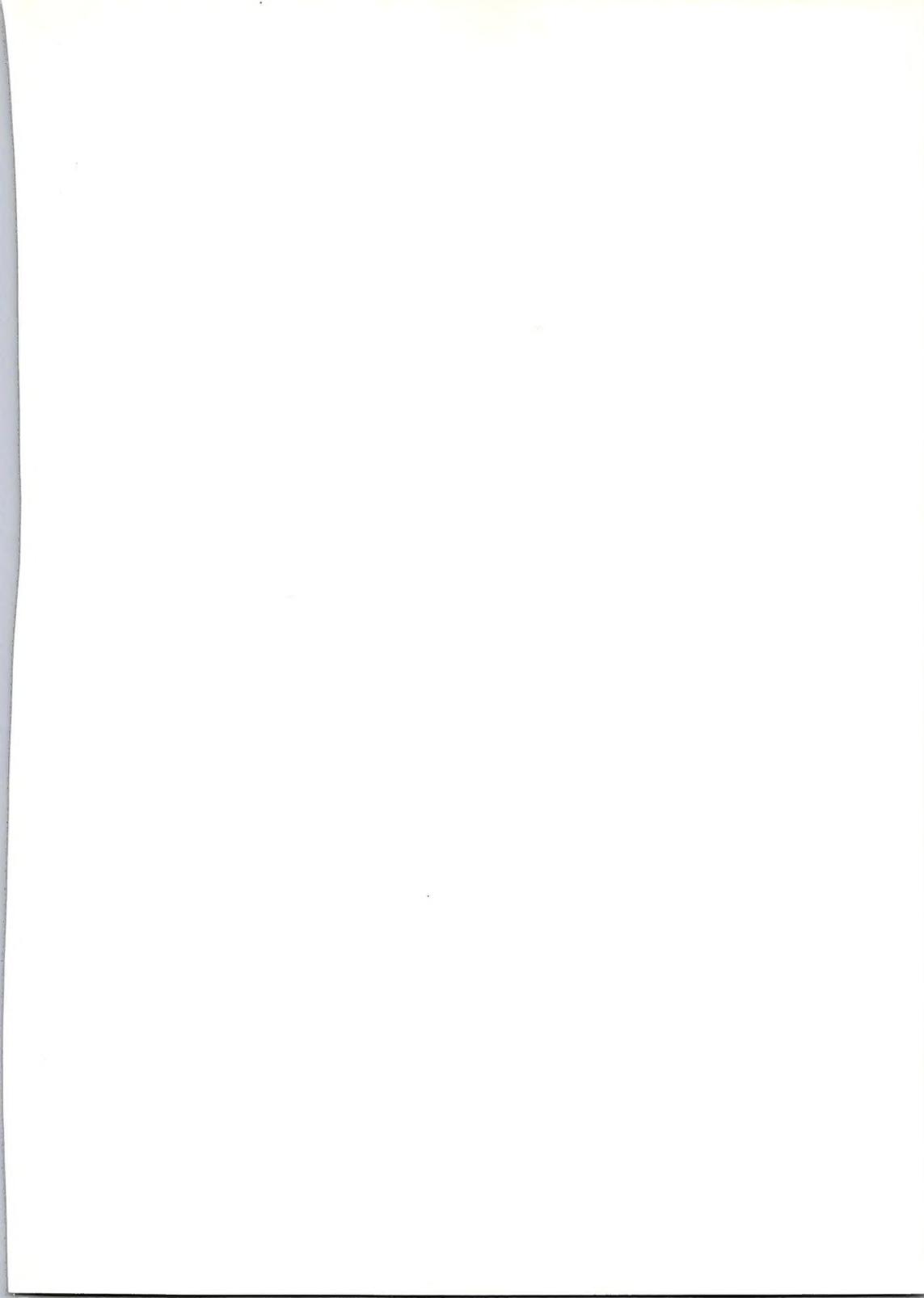
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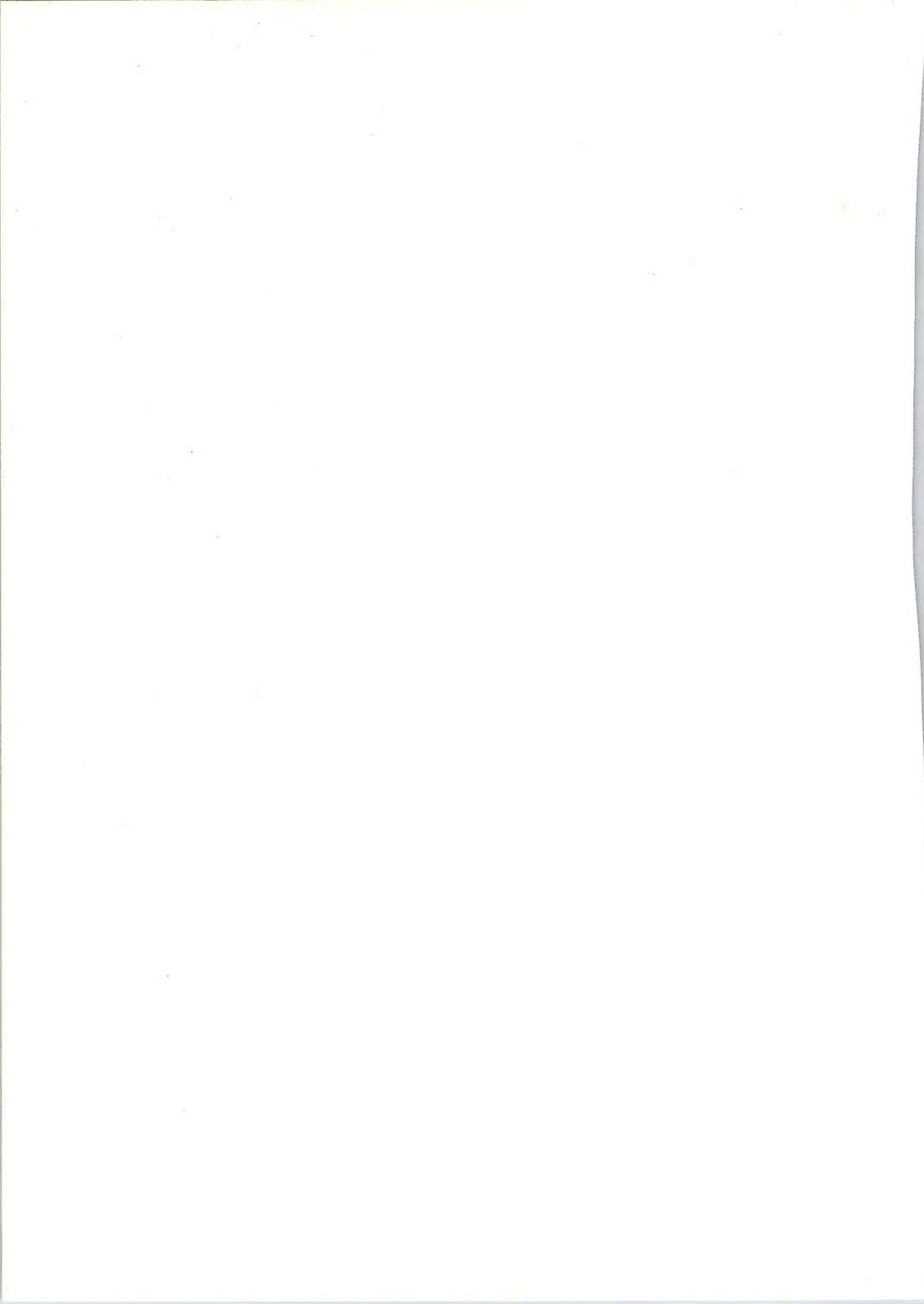
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# MACKENZIE COUNTY COUNCIL

## GREENWOOD



William Greenwood was born in Westport in 1910, and educated in Greymouth. After residing in various parts of New Zealand, he came to Timaru 21 years ago. He was a borough councillor in Hawera for six years, and a city councillor in Timaru for 15 years, 12 years as finance chairman, and for a short time deputy mayor. He is known as an author, his main work being "The Upraised Hand", a monograph on the Ringatu religion, and "Riemenschneider of Warea", the story of a Lutheran missionary in Taranaki. He is a Methodist lay preacher of over 50 years standing, a (Fellow) chartered accountant, and a chartered secretary.

